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# THE LIFE THAT REALLY IS

BY ✓  
LYMAN ABBOTT

*That they may lay hold on that which is really life.*

1 TIM. vi. 19, ALFORD'S TRANSLATION.

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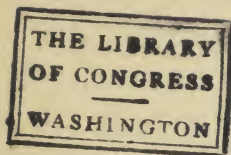
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## PREFACE.

DURING the last year of my pastorate in Plymouth Church a pamphlet edition of the morning sermons was issued, at the request and mainly for the use of members of the congregation, and subsequently about one hundred were bound in a volume bearing the title "The Life that Really Is." The demand for that volume has led to the publication of this one, which, though it bear the same title, differs from its predecessor. Three sermons dealing with current events, and necessarily temporary in their character, have been omitted and others including the last sermon I preached in Plymouth Pulpit, have been inserted in their stead. The title, "The Life that Really Is," has been selected, not because it chances to be the title of one of the sermons, but because it expresses what I believe ought to be one of the chief aims of the preacher, namely, to bring the light of the eternal, the spiritual, the ever present and ever real life to bear upon all the problems of the temporal, the earthly and the apparent. It is because I hope that these sermons may do something to minister to the "Life that Really Is" in those who may read them, that I gladly accede to the request for their publication.

It should perhaps be added that, like all my sermons, these were delivered extemporaneously. I have made no attempt to rewrite or recast them, or indeed to do anything more than secure as nearly as possible the reproduction of the sermons as originally delivered, simply eliminating such palpable infelicities of phraseology as are generally incidental to extemporaneous discourse.

LYMAN ABBOTT.



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## “THE LIFE THAT REALLY IS.”

*“That they may lay hold on the life which is life indeed.”*

*I. Timothy, vi. 19 (Rev. version.)*

THE great mass of men act as though they believed, or a large part of their time they act, as though they believed, that the life, which is seen is the life indeed. The material, visible life, this is to them the real, the actual life ; and the other, the life of faith, of emotion, of imagination, of sentiment, this is the unreal life, the visionary life ; this belongs, not to the practical men, but to the sentimentalists and the visionaries. And so men say, it is all very well to talk about character, about generosity and honesty and virtue, but the great thing is to succeed ; and, by success, they mean having so much money in the bank, so much real estate, so much power in commercial circles. Enthusiasm and patriotism and high principle are all very well, but if you are going to succeed in politics you must understand the machine, and must know how to run with it, that is the way to succeed, that is the life that is life indeed—the practical politician’s life. They say, in art and literature, the age of romanticism has passed, that it belongs to a bygone age, that we have come to the age of realism. What we want the novelist to do, is to portray to us life that is life indeed ; and by that we mean, not the life of heroism, not any form of idealism, but life as it is seen in the common affairs by prosaic men ; they want photographs, not art. And so,



in religion, men are afraid if anything attacks the outside, the symbol, the visible thing; they are afraid if the ritual is disturbed, or the creed, or the Book is inquired into, for these things seem to them the life indeed; the real life is the ritual and the creed and the Bible. As to the Word of God behind the Bible, they do not understand what that means; as to the faith that cannot be put into the creed, they shake their heads over that; as to the worship that has no visible expression, they are very doubtful about that; the life that is real life seems to them to be what the philosophers call an objective life—something that you can see.

Now, Paul's view is always the reverse of this; to him the real life, the life that really is, the life that is life indeed, is the invisible life. And this morning I want to tell you this again: that the only life, the real life, the life that is life indeed, transcends the sensuous and the visible.

It is so in literature. If it is true that we have passed from romanticism into realism, if the drama has nothing to do and the novelist nothing and the poet nothing but to take photographs, then we have bidden good-by to the days of literature. Literature is something higher and nobler and better than photographing society. Literature is life, and the author of literature is, first of all, a man who is able to see life. Not merely the life of the hand, or of the foot, but the invisible life, the interior life from which all the outward activities spring. The poet is one who can see that and portray it and make us see it, and by portraying it and making us see it can make us share it. Real literature is ideal literature. It is the portrayal, not of the things that every man can see, not of the common conversations you can hear in the horse-cars, or the common gossip you can talk over at tea-tables, it is the portrayal of the life that lies behind all visible life, that is nobler and diviner than that which most men see, and such portrayal



of it as stirs men's hearts and makes them see it also. This is the only literature which lasts. The issues of the daily journals are counted by the millions. So are the autumn leaves that fall and are trodden under foot and turned into soil again. But the literature that lasts, the literature that is truly classical, is the literature that looks behind the mask that men wear, and sees behind the mask the living man. It is the literature of a Homer, who shows the courage of the hero and the patient fidelity of the wife ; it is the literature of a Dante, who sees the sins and iniquities of humanity, and makes you behold them shadowed on the mystic curtain of the other world ; the literature of a Shakespeare, who enables us to understand the ambition which lets, "I dared not wait upon I would," or the passionate love that is easily turned into passionate jealousy ; it is the literature of a Tennyson, who portrays a soul wrestling with the problem, is this all, or is there a life yet to come ; it is the literature of a Browning, who shows us God in the poorest and the commonest of men. It shows the homely virtues triumphing in quiet lives. These are the classics. They are not the books that photograph society, they are not tea-table talk, they portray the innermost life of the noblest men made so clear that we can see them. If you want to be quieted read Trollope ; if you want to be stirred to action read Shakespeare.

The highest art has to do with the life that is life indeed. The imitator is not an artist. A man who can simply portray a falling leaf or a silk dress, so that you almost take it for reality, is a skilled artisan and nothing more. Unless behind the tree he sees something, unless in the woman whose dress he portrays he beholds a life, and unless he enables us to see that life in nature and that life in womankind, he is no artist. "Art for art's sake," what does that mean ? If it means that the greatest artist does not paint his pictures

that he may sell them, that he does not even paint them that he may teach a lesson and preach a sermon, if it means that all the noblest art is the spontaneous expression of the life of the artist, it is true. All the noblest work is spontaneous: the love of the mother; the singing of the bird; the service of the father; the courage of the soldier, and the work of the artist with his palette and his brush. Art, if it be true and noble and divine, is spontaneous, but the value of the work depends upon the life which gives it forth. Art is the expression of life? Yes; but it is only high art in case it is the expression of a divine and an ennobling life. What are the pictures that live? Not those that merely tickle the eye with color, that appeal to the baser passions of men, their sensuality and lust. These are seen for a few days, weeks, months, in the picture gallery, and then go to the lumber room of the past; it is Raphael, so painting divine motherhood as to stir a diviner mother love in every woman who looks upon the picture; it is Michael Angelo, so portraying the day of judgment as to bring the splendid glory of the future life into our own; it is a Tissot, turning aside from picturing the woman of Paris in all her various phases of life and going for eight or ten years to Palestine, and coming back with his three hundred pictures, bringing the Christ down here to the nineteenth century and enabling us to understand what Dr. Van Dyke has well called "the human life of God." These are the pictures that live—the pictures that spring from a life within and stir the life of other men within.

And so of music. Music may be prostituted to sensuous purposes, either in the ball-room or in the revival meeting. But the music that lasts is neither the jingling melody of the one nor the more stirring, and yet more temporary, melody of the other. Music is the interpretation of a life which never can be interpreted in any other way. If the

printed program tells you what the music means—shepherds dancing, birds singing, thunder rolling, soldiers marching—you have second-class music. A piece of music which can be put into words is always a second quality of music; the music which lasts is the music which springs from a life that cannot find expression in words, and stirs a life that transcends all that the eye has seen, all that the ear has heard, all that the heart of man has conceived, all that the tongue has spoken. It is the music of a Bach or a Handel, uttering the praise of generations; it is the music of a Schumann interpreting the woes and the perplexities of the age in the presence of the Great Mystery that ever surrounds us; it is the music of a Wagner stirring us with human passion of love and hope and fear to its uttermost; it is the music of a Beethoven—and what is that? Ah, who can tell what is the music of a Beethoven?

In politics the life that is life indeed is not the life of office-seeking and office-getting and machine-manipulating and vote canvassing. It is not the man who has been working with the machine and for the machine, manipulating votes and contriving politics, it is the man who has been independent and courageous and brave and self-forgetful and serving his country—he is the man who becomes Governor of the state. How many men are there in this congregation to whom Lord North is anything but a name? For twelve years Prime Minister of England, ruling an empire, successful politician, while Burke was without office and Chatham was dead; but a man must be fairly well versed in history to know anything more about him than his name, and the utterances of Burke and Chatham flow down the stream of life, and wherever they go, life is better. Who knows the names of the shrewd politicians in the time of the Revolution? Who will ever forget the names of Jefferson and of Hamilton and of Washington? Who, except

those who lived in the time immediately preceding the Civil War, can recall the names of the skilful, shrewd, wire-pulling, designing politicians in the compromise with slavery; and who in American history will ever forget the names of Abraham Lincoln and Seward and Sumner and Chase? The men who believed in the life which is life indeed, the men who took their stand on principles, the men who believed that God was behind a principle, the men who dared to suffer and to die for principle, they are the men who live forever, their life is immortal, and the other succeeds to-day and is buried in oblivion to-morrow.

The greatness of a nation depends on its interior life. Not on the size of its territory; not on the number of its people; not on its great highways, binding the people together in one great nation; not on the plentitude of its arts; not on the largeness of its wealth. You may almost say that the little nations have been the great ones in human history, and the big nations have been the little ones. Persia was a big nation and Greece was a great one. Russia is a big nation and Great Britain is a great one. There is something splendid in the history of that little people on those little islands, surrounded by the sea; that little people with their enterprise, their courage, their honesty, their sturdiness of purpose, in spite of angularity, in spite of lack of tact, in spite of brusqueness of behavior, in spite of hardness of dealings sometimes with subject races, none the less a nation of enterprise, of energy, of indomitable courage, whose flag has dared the Northern seas and the Southern seas, the East and the West, whose men have gone every whither, and wherever they have gone have carried the higher civilization with them. And what will make America great? More territory? What is the difference between the American of 1900 and the America of 1600? In 1600 the same fertile prairies, the same boundless forests, the same



great lakes, the same mill streams ready to be harnessed to industry, the same mountains full of silver and gold and copper and iron and coal, and three hundred thousand Indians roaming over it; to-day supporting seventy millions of, on the whole, peaceful and prosperous people. What is the difference? The life which is life indeed. The difference is the difference in men. The difference between an Indian and an American is not that one lives in a tepee and the other in a house, but that one is willing to live in a tepee and the other is determined to live in a house. It is character. It is an old, old story, but we often live as if we thought it was not true.

( And so in religion, the life that really is, the life that is life indeed, that is the only thing. Other things may minister to it, may express it, may utter it, but life lies back of them all. It is not the ritual, it is the spirit of reverence. it is not the creed, it is the spirit of faith. It is not the book, it is the living God in the hearts of living men whose utterances are interpreted in the book. It is not the book that is sacred, but God in the hearts of men; not the creed that is sacred, but the faith of God, of which the creed may or may not be an exponent; not the ritual that is sacred, but the spirit of love and adoration and reverence which the ritual attempts to express; and if that reverence is really there, it is a matter of no concern whatever whether it be expressed before an altar with a swinging incense, or be expressed by a vested choir and a listening congregation, or, as here in Plymouth, by the great congregation uniting their voices in one great song of praise, or as in the Quaker meeting-house—not expressed at all. It is the life, the life that really is, the life of reverence and faith and hope and love that makes religion, and those other things are either the expression of it, or the promotion of it, or the hindrances and the manacles upon it.

What is your life—real or false? What is your life? Booker T. Washington told us last Thursday night that the first thing the negro wanted was property and education. This struggling, scheming, elbow-shoving and pushing population of ours after property, is it all bad? No, a great deal of it is very good; because property is either a power which the life that really is can use, or the symbol and expression of the life that really is which has produced it. For the most part men of property—in this country, at all events—are men who possess industry, economy and temperance, the threefold virtue which makes what we call thrift; and the value is not in the bank accounts, it is not in the real estate, it is in the economy, the industry and the temperance. A young man flings himself off the wharf and rescues a drowning man, does it again and again, and by and by the Life-saving Service pins some emblem of honor on his breast. The value is not the thing which is pinned upon his breast. The value is the courage and the self-denial and the service which he has done. A boy goes into the army; enters as a sergeant, comes back with epaulets on his shoulders. There is nothing in the epaulets; there is everything in the courage, the heroism, the patience, the bravery that won the epaulets. Wealth is an instrument which may minister to the life that really is. Wealth may be the symbol which shows that the man has possessed the life that really is; but the life is everything; the economy, the temperance, the industry—the thrift, in one word—the spirit of self-denial for a higher end. What is your life? What is your home? What are your politics? What is literature to you, and art to you, and the Bible to you? These are nothing in themselves, save as they minister to that life which is life indeed, that life which never can be taken from us, that life which is immortal because it is God's own life in the souls of men.

Inspire us, Thou Lifegiver, with the life that really is, that we may be no shadows pursuing shadows, but true men and true women, learning in Thy school, inspired by Thy Spirit, growing into Thy likeness. For Christ's sake. Amen.

## THE SECRET AND THE REVEALED THINGS.

*"The secret things belong unto the Lord our God: but those things which are revealed belong unto us, and to our children for ever, that we may do all the words of this law."*

*(Deuteronomy, xxix. 29.)*

THERE are some things respecting which we ought to be agnostics. They are the secret things which belong to God. There are other things concerning which we ought not to be agnostics. They are the revealed things which belong to us and to our children. They belong to us, in order that we may do righteously. This statement, that they belong to us that we may do righteously, indicates the dividing line between the things that may be known and the things that may not be known. The things which concern us, which touch our life, lie within the realm of our knowledge; the things which do not touch us, which do not concern our life, concerning which we may hold one theory or another theory, and our life still remain right, do not belong to us. We may discuss them, but they are not a part of the vital truths of religion.

This is recognized as true, even in the material realm. No philosopher will undertake to tell us what matter is. He only knows what are the effects of matter. He knows that it is hard or soft; that it is black or white; that it has shape and contour; but what it is in its essence, he does not know. I believe the latest theory (though it is pretty



hard to tell what is the latest theory in philosophy or science), I believe the latest theory is that matter is simply a form of force. It does not differ from other forces. To use the philosophical phrase, we do not know the noumenon, we only know the phenomena. We only know that which is manifest, and that there is always something back of that which is manifest. We talk learnedly about attraction of gravitation, but no one knows what it is which draws the apple from the tree. We talk learnedly about electricity, but I believe no one knows what electricity is. Is it force? Is it matter? Is there any difference between force and matter? We do not know. We do not know what light is. We know what the effects of light are. And we have concluded that there is an ether which pervades all space, and the waves of which produce what we call light, but we do not know that there is such ether. It is a purely hypothetical ether. No one ever saw it; no one ever had any tangible and direct evidence of it. It is the unknown and the unknowable.

In a similar manner, there is the known and the unknown in religion. And the difficulty about religious discussion has been that most of it has been fighting about the unknown. We have battled about the things we did not know about; much as if the scientists, instead of considering how they can use electricity to light us, to carry us, and to do our errands for us, should get into hot controversy as to whether it is matter or force, and excommunicate one another, because one thought it was matter and another thought it was force; or as if the doctors, instead of considering how they can promote health and how they can cure disease and conquer death, should get into a hot discussion about what is the nature of life and what is the nature of death.

“Nothing is more certain,” says Herbert Spencer, “than

that we are ever in the presence of an Infinite and Eternal Energy from which all things proceed." Now what can we know about that Infinite and Eternal Energy? We say that He is omnipresent. What do we mean? Do we mean that God is equally everywhere? Is He? We think that the brain is the seat of the mind. The man is, as it were, localized in his brain. Is God localized somewhere in the center of the universe, or is He unlocalized, existing everywhere equally? A very interesting question to discuss. A hone on which you can sharpen your razor. But we do not know. All that we do know is that everywhere in the universe He is operative. That is all we know. But whether there may be or may not be some central throne whereon He sits in light, unapproachable, we do not know. One may say yes, and another may say no, and neither really know the better than the other. We say that He is omnipotent. What do we mean? Can He do all things? Can He make two and two five? Can He make wrong right and right wrong? There is a theory that the laws of mathematics are simply the limitations of our own mind. There is a theory that the laws of mathematics are essential and eternal. To us they are essential; and that is all we know, Omnipotence means that all the power there is, is subject to Him and He is the fountain and source of it. But it does not mean that there are no limits to power. We say that He is Creator. What do we mean? Do we mean that matter is not eternal, that once there was no matter, and God spake, and then matter came into existence? We do not know what matter is. How do we know whether He made it, or whether it existed from eternity and He has fashioned it into order out of chaos? We do not know; we cannot know. These things that concern the essence of the Divine, we do not know; they are the secret things which do not belong to us.

But wherever God comes in touch with us, we do know. We know that there is a natural order in the universe ; we know that there is somewhere a rule ; and we know that these rules are absolute, unchangeable, immutable. We know that they cannot be diverted or turned aside. Did He make them ? We do not know. But they are, and they are directed to intelligent ends. That we know. We know that there is a physical ruler, and a physical rule in the universe. And as there is a physical law in the universe, so there is a moral order in the universe. It is ; we do not create. It is, so far as we are concerned, eternal. It always has been ; it always will be. There is a moral Governor and a moral government. We recognize this more and more. The progress of human thought is not toward chaos. Men once thought that there was no physical order, that there were as many gods as phenomena ; gradually they came to see that all physical laws are from one Law-giver. Once they thought there was no moral order, or scarcely recognized it. Now we are coming more and more to see that there is a moral order in the universe. More than that, we are coming to see, through evolution, that this moral order and this physical order make for progress. It tends to make every day better than the one that went before, and every year better than the year that went before, and every epoch better than the epoch that went before. We know that there is physical order, and a moral order, and that order means progress. We do not need to have a Bible for that ; we simply have to use the eyes in our heads and the brains behind the eyes.

How has this God revealed Himself ? Paul says He has not left Himself without a witness in any land. How do these witnesses differ ? He was a witness in Socrates, in Buddha, in every noble and true life, in every land and in every epoch ; He is a witness of Himself in nature, and He

is a witness of Himself in the Bible. How do these witnesses differ ? How does inspiration differ from genius ? How does the inspiration of the olden time differ from the inspiration of the present time ? How does the inspiration of Egypt differ from the inspiration of Pagan lands ? Do you know what inspiration is ? Do you know what genius is ? There was once upon a time a man named William Shakespeare who wrote in England, and a man named Martin Farquhar Tupper who wrote in England, and you know the difference between their writings ; but can you know what is the difference in the structure or size of their brains, which made one write as the one wrote, and the other write as the other wrote ? You do not know what genius is ; you do not know what inspiration is. We do not know in what way God operates on the mind. We do not know in what way God operated on the mind of Socrates ; nor in what way God operated on the mind of Paul. How can we tell what is the difference of the method of operation on one mind and on another ? We can know the difference in product, but we cannot know the difference in process. I defy the most skilful botanist to tell why it is that the peach stone brings forth the peach tree, and the apple seed the apple tree, planted in the same ground, rained upon by the same rain, shone upon by the same sun ; but you know the difference between the peach and the apple. Now, there never was a book which has produced the effect in the world that the Bible has produced—never ; never a book which has carried the comfort that has carried to the sorrowing one, the inspiration that has carried to the downcast one, uplifting those that were fallen under the power of temptation and sin, having power to give vigor to those who were paralyzed, and to open the ears of those deaf to spiritual truth. And it still has power. If you were to have a map of the world hung up here at my side



with the countries where there is no civilization colored black ; and where a little civilization, there brown ; and where more civilization, a lighter brown ; and where the highest civilization, clear white ; you would find this to be true—just in the ratio in which the open Bible has gone, just in that ratio the civilization has gone. Where there has been no Bible, there has been no civilization—in India, in China, in Africa, where there has been no Bible, no commercial system, no credit system, no post-office system, no bank system, no railroad, no printing press, none of those things that make even for physical comfort in life. And then you come to Spain or to Russia, and there the Bible half open, and the country half light and half dark. Then you come to Protestant America, which we all think is first in civilization, and Protestant England, and there the Bible open and every man free to read it. We can tell what the Bible has done for the world, and we can tell what the Bible is doing for the world ; and if you will take it and use it, you can find out what it can do for you. When you get back into the question whether God dictated it, or God inspired it, but only in theological and religious matters, or whether and how far the Divine was intermixed with the human ; when you get into those questions, you get into what belongs to the secret processes. You can no more tell how God operates on a human mind than you can tell how God operates on a planted seed.

There has been a great deal of discussion in the Church respecting the person of Christ, and the result of it has been the discussion of the question : “What is the relation of Jesus Christ to the Eternal and Infinite Father? Some have said, respecting Father, Son, and Spirit, that there were three persons with three separate consciousnesses, but with one will ; and others have said : No, there was only one person with three manifestations, and they were eternal

manifestations, and they always manifested themselves in those three ways ; and others have said : There was one person and one eternal manifestation, but three manifestations in time—the Father, Son and Holy Spirit—so far as this globe is concerned and in this time. And men have fenced with one another—and they used not foils either ; they fenced with swords that drew blood—on questions respecting which neither of them knew anything. We do not know ; we cannot know the relation of Father, Son and Spirit to each other. That is one of the secret things which does not belong to us.

But we do know Christ's relation to us ; and that is enough for us to know. We can know that Christ is the typical man. We can see Him in history, the type, not of any profession or any class or any age ; not the typical Gentile, not the typical Jew, not the typical rich man, not the typical poor man, not the typical wise man ; alike for Oriental and Occidental, for wise man and unwise man, for rich man and poor man, for first century man and nineteenth century man, for philosopher, for merchant, for statesman, for soldier, for man and for woman. Christ gave the world new virtues. Meekness was counted a vice when He came to the world, and it has become a virtue ; patience was counted a vice when He came to the world, and it is a virtue. If He did not create new virtues, at all events He manifested them, and enabled us to see them. Are any of you amateur photographers, and have you ever taken your plate into a dark room and looked at it ? There was nothing. And then you put the acid upon it, and worked it back and forth, and have seen the picture come ? So under the influence of Christ, working in a room that seems as if it were a dark room, you have seen the virtues grow into sight that men before could not see, and patience and meekness and self-

sacrifice have grown to be the world's glory. And as you can see that our Christ is to us the type of man for men and women to follow after, so you can see that He is the manifestation of God. Now, the moment I say this, your minds are apt to run right back to this question: What is His relation to the Eternal Father? For myself, I say frankly, I do not know. What I do know is this: That there is no other life and no other manifestation in history, in humanity, in nature, in philosophy, in art, nothing else that so reveals to me the Eternal Goodness as does the life of Jesus of Nazareth. That is enough for me to know, and that I do know. Do you remember how Paul, going into Athens, looked upon all their idols and altars and temples, and he said, I have been looking upon the objects of your reverence. One after another of the world's objects of reverence have been fading out of sight, until now there has come to be but one object of reverence—Jesus Christ. Our thought of God is no longer a Phœnician God of might. No! no! we will not worship power. Our conception of God is no longer a Brahmanic conception of God, although some Brahmins come over here to try to give it us. We no longer worship pure intellect. That is not the object of our reverence. The object of our reverence is no longer the Mohammedan conception of God—law incarnate. The Calvinist conception of God has faded out of human life. Our object of reverence is love; and love as it shows itself in the supreme form of love—self-sacrifice; and self-sacrifice as it shows itself in the supreme form of self-sacrifice—laying down life for others; and that supreme form—laying down life for those who do not deserve it, do not appreciate it. There is nothing beyond that. So to live as to be willing to die, and so to live as to be willing to die for men who do not deserve love and do not appreciate love—that is supreme—there is nothing beyond that.

That is luminous in the Cross of Christ who is the one sovereign, supreme, supernatural object of the world's reverence. If I had time I could turn to Renan, the French infidel, to Hooykaas, the Dutch infidel, to John Stuart Mill, the English infidel, and read you from their pages words of reverence more appreciative of Jesus Christ than you could find in the monkish scholasticism of the Middle Ages, pious as it was.

I have a friend in the country who has in one of his rooms a plate-glass window, framed with a picture frame ; and as you go into the room it appears as though there was a beautiful landscape hanging on the wall before you—mountain, tree, river, lawn, all brought within the compass of that frame. One man going in says, What a beautiful picture that is ! And another man says, It is not a picture at all, it is plate glass you are looking through. And the first says, No ; it is a human production, but it looks exactly like mountain, and river, and lawn. The other says, It is mountain, river, lawn, you see through the glass. That is the difference between the Unitarian and the Orthodox. Both stand and look. One says, It is a man, but all the qualities in him are Divine. The other says, You are mistaken ; when you come to understand it better you will see that it is a plate-glass window and through it you are seeing God Himself, not merely a picture of God. I am orthodox ; I believe that I see through the plate-glass window the very face of God Himself. But, after all, the one vital thing, the one essential thing, the one transcendent thing, is this : that Jesus Christ has brought us a new conception of God into the World ; He has made us see that God is not mere force—as the Phœnicians thought ; not mere intellect—as the Brahmins thought ; not incarnate law—as the Mohammedans thought ; but that God is love. We can understand that which Christ teaches us ; we can under-



stand His relation to us ; and that other side that reaches back to the Eternal Father I am glad to leave a solemn, awful, splendid mystery.

There has been a great deal of discussion on the question. What was the effect of the sacrifice and death of Christ in working out the forgiveness of sins? What is the proper theory, it is said, of the atonement? At one time it was said that the world had sold itself to the devil. We belonged to him, and God bought us back from the devil by giving His own Son to the devil instead. And the devil thought he had made a good bargain ; but he could not keep the Son in his possession ; for the Son was too strong for him. So he lost both the purchase price and the capital he had before. You smile, but it was serious theology at one time. And then there was the theory that God was angry, and that Jesus Christ came into the world to placate the anger of God. And then there was the theory that the angels and the saints looked on the drama that was being wrought on this world, and it was necessary for the moral effect upon the whole universe that sin should not be forgiven without a penalty being inflicted for it. Law required it. All of these theories, you see, were alike in this : They all considered what is the effect of the passion and death of Christ on supernal beings, on the devil, on God, on the saints and angels unknown to us. Discussion of that is well—at least may be well for those who have time and inclination for it. It quickens the intellect, and there is this to be said for it : It is better to spend one's time on such questions than to spend it all on stocks and bonds and houses and afternoon teas. To be considering what are the eternal things that lie beyond the limits of our vision, even though to consider it to little purpose, is better than to spend it all on mere temporal and sensuous matters. But what we do know is the effect which the passion, the life,

the incarnation and the death of Jesus Christ has wrought on human history. Where it touches us, that we can understand. Where it touches the devil, we cannot; where it touches God Almighty in His eternal justice, we cannot know; where it touches the great universe, we cannot know. But where it touches human life and human experience, there we can know. Go to any heathen temple, and what will you find? The note, from beginning to end, a note of complaint, a cry. Go into a Christian temple, and what will you find? Just such hymns as we have been singing here this morning—praise, thanksgiving, gladness. You may search all Pagan literature from A to Z and you will not find, all put together, as much note of hope, as much sense of peace, as much joy in pardon, as much confidence in God's forgiveness, as much sweetness and song, as you will find in any one of such hymns in the modern Christian hymn-book. The world has gotten a new experience because of Christ's death. We have a new sense of duty to our neighbor; we have learned to forgive one another; we have a new conception of social obligation. We are no longer studying merely how to avenge crime, but how to cure it. We are learning to see sin as Christ saw it, as an awful disease, and to feel respecting sin as Christ felt—a profound pity. Our prisons are penitentiaries—in theory at least, places for the development of penitence; and the best overseers and the best wardens are trying to work out a system of criminal dealing along the line of redemption and purification. You can know what Christ's death may be to you. If you have come in here with a burden, He can take it off. If you have come in here careless, He can teach you to know your need. If you are a sinner and know your need of forgiveness, He can bring you forgiveness and send you away rejoicing. If you have come in here with a hard heart, He can take the hardness and bitterness out,

and He can make you see that it is a splendid thing to suffer for one who does not deserve the suffering.

What God is in His essence, we cannot know. It seems strange that the finite should imagine that He can define the infinite. But we can know that we are living under a law of physical order and of physical and moral progress, and take new hope from our sense of loyalty to the unknown God. What is His method of manifesting Himself to others, we cannot know; but we can open our hearts to His sunshine, and receive His life. What the Christ is in His relations to the Eternal Father, we cannot know; but to us He can be the model which we follow and the revelation of God whom we adore. What has been the effect of the Cross of Christ on the supernatural and invisible world, we can at best only surmise; but we can let that cross preach peace to our own hearts and forgiveness to our own souls and inspire in us the spirit of a Christly pity, because that is a Divine pity. The secret things belong to God. Let us stand with awe and reverence before the curtain. The revealed things belong to us, and they belong to us that we may know and do the will of God.

## THE CHRISTIAN LIFE.

*"I have fought a good fight, I have finished the course, I have kept the faith."*

II (Timothy, iv. 7.)

THESE words are supposed to have been written as Paul was approaching the end of his life. He speaks of himself as a sacrifice, ready to be offered in its completion to Almighty God. "I am already being offered, and the time of my departure is at hand." And then he looks back, and this is what his memory is able to bring to him: "I have fought a good fight, I have finished the course, I have kept the faith."

It is certain he could not have uttered these words unless life had been a battle to him: It was not an easy thing for him to maintain a Christian experience and a Christian life; unless it had been a race: He never was satisfied, but was always pushing on to something higher and better; unless there had been something given to him to guard which he had found it difficult to guard: "I have kept the faith." It is to these three aspects of life I desire to call your thought this morning.

First. Life is a battle. It is a commonplace of science now to say that struggle for existence, "survival of the fittest," is the aphorism and the interpretation of life. And though that has been enlarged, rightly and wisely, by Drummond, to struggle for others as well as struggle for

existence, still it is a struggle. Looked at in the very lowest plane, and in the very simplest form, life is a battle. If we rise from the material form to the social and commercial, you all recognize that. Life is a constant struggle. Commerce is a form of warfare, and only the men who have some war power in them win in the battle. It is true the battle is oftentimes an evil one; oftentimes corrupted by greed of booty; but it is a battle. It is in vain for us to devise schemes by which competition can be put out of civilized life. Competition is the condition of life. It is the scientific condition of physical life. It is the scientific condition of social life. The men who drop out of competition drop out of life. The men who either are so satisfied that they no longer care to struggle, or are so discouraged that they no longer have any hope for struggle, these are, on the one hand, the idle rich, and, on the other hand, the idle poor. The men who are doing anything in life are engaged in a struggle.

It has been the law of all political progress. We have had to battle since the world began. Eternal vigilance is the price, not only of liberty, but of all forms of righteousness. In the midst of battle we look back and long for the times that are past, when there was purity and honesty, and truth and righteousness, without a battle. There never was such a time. There was the same corruption to be fought in the days of Washington, and the same corruption to be fought in the days of Lincoln, that there is to be fought now. There was the same civic strife in New York, fifty or a hundred years ago, that there is to-day in New York. The battle is not a new one. Therefore history, civic and social purity and truth and righteousness have been maintained only by men with their guns in their hands. It has been the law of all theological progress. Then look back along the history of the church and scoff at the old



theological conflicts. They ridicule the controversies which have agitated the church and call them battles about words. But they were not battles about words. It is true that the flames of hell sometimes mingled with the flames of Heaven, true that the devil had his share in the battles in the church, as he has his share in other battles. But there never would have been growth in religious knowledge if there had not been controversy. The truth has been struck out by controversy, as the spark is struck out by the flint and the steel. It has been in the friction of man with man that the truth has ever been evoked, and, so far as we can see, will be evoked to the end of time. It has not stolen noiselessly upon men; it has come out of the glare of the cannon and out of the smoke of the battle.

What is true in the material and the social, and the political and the theological world, is true in the moral world. There is no winning of character without battle. No man attains manhood easily. Every man has a battle to fight. I suppose there is no profession, some representative of which has not come to me at some time, in person or by letter, and asked, Is it possible for a man to succeed in this profession and be a Christian? I have had merchants say, "Can a man be a successful merchant and be a Christian?" I have had lawyers say, "Can a man be a successful lawyer and be a Christian?" I have had politicians say, "Can a man be a successful politician and be a Christian?" I have had doctors say, "Can a man practise medicine and be a consistent Christian?" And I have had ladies say, "Can one go into society and be a consistent Christian?" I never did have a minister ask me, "Can a man be a minister and be a consistent Christian?" but he might ask it just as well. There is absolutely no walk in life in which there are not temptations. It is not easy, in the competi-

tion of life, in the dealing with unscrupulous competitors, to maintain a high, noble standard of integrity in commercial business. It is done, but it is to be done by battle. It is not easy in journalism to stand for the truth, the whole truth and nothing but the truth. There are men who are doing it, men who are ready to sacrifice bread and butter and salary, to go hungry themselves, and even suffer the wife and children to go hungry, rather than prostitute their pen to lascivious and evil purposes. But no man stands for truth in journalism who does not have to fight to do it; no man can go into any profession, I do not care what it is, without having a battle to fight with foes that beleaguer him. He cannot stand in my own profession without it. It is not easy for a minister to be absolutely sincere, absolutely candid. I believe there are as many brave men, at least, in the pulpit as there are in any other profession. I am inclined to think there are more. But it is not easy for a man to stand for what he thinks is the truth and righteousness in his day and generation and speak with only the fear of God, and without the fear of men. He cannot do it without a battle.

But this is nothing as compared with the battle a man has to fight within himself. There are, perhaps, eighteen hundred people in this house. If there are, they are eighteen hundred battle-fields, or nearly that. It is possible there may be some saints who have risen so high and gone so far that, like Paul, they can say, "I have fought my fight," and look back upon it as a thing that is ended. It is possible that there are some cowards and cravens and camp followers who have fallen out of the ranks, who have given up the battle and have surrendered themselves, to be bound hand and foot, carried whithersoever what they are pleased to call their destiny may carry them. But leaving out this handful of saints that are perfected, if such there

are, and this handful of the sinners that are hopeless, if such there are, every soul in this house is a battle-field, and every man knows he is a battle-field and thinks his neighbor is not. One man has to fight natural acquisitiveness in order to be benevolent; another man has to fight natural pride in order to be humble; another man has to fight natural irritability in order to be patient; another man has to fight natural vanity in order to be truly sympathetic, without being swayed and turned aside by every wind of doctrine and every passing opinion. Every man is a battle-field; and it is only by the battle the man is made—only thus. Life would not be worth living if there were no battles. For we could not be heroes if there were no strife. There is no way of getting courage except by having to face danger; no way of getting humility, except by making pride bow its head; no way of getting the power of a strong, resolute purpose, except by making approbateness the servant of conscience; no way of becoming truly loving, except by making selfishness bow its head to the yoke of righteousness. We win our victories by our battles and gain our characters by our conquests. This is the first battle for us to fight. Not the battle for purity in the city, or purity in the nation, or purity in the State. First, the battle for purity in our own hearts and our own lives.

I read last night in Tennyson's life Tennyson's poem, "Britons, Guard Your Own." Let me read one verse.

Call home your ships across Biscayan tides,  
To blow the battle from their oaken sides.

Why waste they yonder

Their idle thunder?

Why stay they there to guard a foreign throne?

Seamen, guard your own!

It would be a good verse to ring out now in politics.



While men are asking us to make navies that shall do battle for Cuba, and for Hawaii, it will be well for us to begin to cry out "Americans, guard your own!" It is not in Cuba, not in Hawaii, not along the Canadian boundary, not with Spain or England or any foreign foe, the chief battle is to be fought. They are our chief enemies who creep with slimy mark and poisonous purpose into the heart of the nation; who put their hand upon the throat of a great city, while they rifle its pocket with the other; they are our enemies who enter our home and work evil, in luxury, licentiousness and divorce; they are our enemies who enter our commerce with adulterated goods and poisonous drugs; they are our enemies who enter our hearts and put there their pride and selfishness and all damnable vice. Americans, guard your own! And you, young men, do not think that you can fight corruption without while you let corruption fester within. You cannot fight a corrupt government and be willing yourself to cheat the government of its taxes. You cannot fight indifference in other men and be yourself careless of your own public duties. You cannot fight the greed that riots and plunders and have your own fingers itch with greed to plunder men. "Americans, guard your own!" Life is a battle, a battle in one's own heart, and there first the victory must be won.

Life is a race. "I have finished the course." And in some sense the race follows the battle. We fight the battle that we may get liberty to run the race. Lay aside every weight and the sin that doth so easily beset you, and run with patience the race that is set before you. The first thing to do is to get rid of the encumbering weight, to lay aside the besetting sin; the next thing is to run the race without hindrance.

I wish I could put before you Symonds' graphic picture of the Olympian Games. The time has come—the Spring

time—for the races. From all over Greece men are gathering to this great occasion. Merchants and pedlers are coming with their wares; princes with their retinues; women in their pomp and circumstance. Poets are coming with their poems; historians to read their histories, and dramatists to read their dramas (for there are no printed books); and politicians to ply their trade as well. All Greece is gathering at the Olympian Games. The hour has come. Men are ranged alongside one another. The signal is given; they start and run their eager race; and when it is over, the crown is given to one. And the greatest poet of Greece counts himself not unworthy to sing the praise of a man who wins the race in the Olympian Games—something such as this is the picture which is before Paul, when he says, “I have finished the course.” He has been running a race. He tells us in Philippians what this race is. “Forgetting those things which are behind, reaching forward to those things which are before, I press toward the mark for the upward calling of God in Christ Jesus.”

Life is a constant pursuit of an ever-vanishing ideal. This man is working for money. He thinks he will be rich when he gets ten thousand. When he gets ten thousand, he thinks he will be rich when he gets a hundred thousand. When he gets a hundred thousand, he thinks he will be rich when he gets a million. When he gets a million, he thinks he will be rich when he gets a hundred million. And when he gets a hundred million, he still wants more. His idea of wealth is always an evanescent ideal.

We are constantly improving our comforts, constantly enlarging our material resources, and we never go fast enough. We thought it was a great achievement when we could travel in the cars twenty miles an hour, then

forty, and now we are talking about a hundred. We thought we had made great progress when we got rid of the 'busses of Broadway and got horse-cars. Now we have cable cars that carry us twice as fast as horse-cars, and still we want "rapid transit." The luxuries of yesterday are the comforts of to-day and the necessities for to-morrow. The ideal of civilization is always a vanishing ideal. So in government. The whole political history of the world has been climbing up the hill toward an ideal. Government to-day, with all its corruption, is better than it ever was before; but our ideal of government has grown a great deal faster than the government has grown. It ought to be so. It should grow faster. So in scholarship. The boy thinks it is an easy thing to be a scholar. When he gets to a certain age in boyhood or girlhood, he thinks he knows almost everything. But as he goes on with his studies the area to be studied grows faster than the area which is covered by his study; and when he gets to the end of his life, and all men are looking up to him as a learned man, he says, I do not know anything. So in our productive work. The poet is never satisfied with his poem. The artist is never satisfied with his picture. The orator is never satisfied with his speech. When men come to him, and say, That was a splendid speech you delivered, he hangs his head in shame, for he knows that he has failed. He knows the thoughts that burned within him in his heart, the picture he saw in his closet, he has failed to interpret. He could not do it. The ideal lay far beyond his achievement.

So the ideal of character always runs beyond the attainment. I meet now and then in the little pastoral work I am permitted to do, with men and women—more women—who have grown discouraged, because they are not able to come up to their ideal. My friend, if you were able to

come up to your ideal, then you ought to be discouraged. There are two classes of persons that drop out of life. First, those that are discouraged. You cannot put courage in their hearts. Secondly, those that are self-satisfied. It is almost impossible to do anything for them. "Seest thou a man wise in his own conceit, there is more hope of a fool than of him." Life is a perpetual pursuit after a higher ideal and a vanishing ideal. And yet, do we not look backward for our ideal? Is it not the character of Christ that is always ideal? Yes; and it is a wonderful witness to the transcendent character of Christ that it grows more and more ideal the more we approach it, and, as it were, vanishes beyond our sight the nearer we come to it.

Our race is—forgetting those things and reaching forward to those things that are before—to press toward the mark of upward call of God in Christ Jesus—a call that ever says higher and still higher. Nor shall the Christian soul be satisfied until it has a character so pure and true that it rings responsive to every verse in the fifth chapter of Matthew; knows no lustful thought, knows no uncharitable thought, knows no profane thought, knows no hateful thought, loves all men, loves enemies. Nor shall the Christian ideal be satisfied in our lives until our service is sacrifice and our sacrifice is joy. Nor shall the Christian ideal be attained by us until our submission is more than resignation and our prayer is not what we will, but what Thou wilt. Nor shall our Christian ideal be reached until our life of devotion is no longer asking the Father for things, but living in the Father as Christ lived in Him, sharing the glory of the Father as Christ shared that glory; not wrestling in prayer, but coming to Him always with the word, "I know that thou hearest me always."

Life is a treasure guarding. "I have kept the faith." You have read the story, perhaps, of friends going on a



journey across the plain. There is treasure in the stage coach. A band of robbers surround and attack it. Some seize the leaders by the head; some turn their weapons against the coach, and cry, Hold up your hands! But they are not cowards on this stage coach. They do not hold up their hands, except to hold them with pistols in them, and answer shot with shot, and those holding the leaders by the head drop down from that fire and sneak away. And the stage drives on, and the treasure has been saved. And still there is a long journey across the arid plain, and the wounded are to be carried and cared for as best they can during this long journey, and it is wearisome and perilous. But at last that, too, is ended. And when at last the stage coach drives in to its destination, and they that were carrying the treasure get down from the box, this is what they can say: We have fought a good fight, we fought it bravely; we have finished our journey, we came through it patiently; we have kept the treasure that was given to us, here it is. This is life as Paul described it. First, a hard fight, then a wearisome journey, but at the end of it this: "I have kept the faith."

You remember how he tells the Philippians what he had kept before he became a Christian. As touching righteousness, that is, in the law, he says, I was blameless. He kept the righteousness. But when he came to the end of his Christian life, what he says is, "I have kept the faith." It is both more and less to keep the faith than to keep the righteousness. What he has kept is his faith in truth, his faith in the Eternal, his faith in himself as God's child. If he interprets the race in the Epistle to the Philippians, and if he interprets the battle by a passage in Corinthians, which I will not stop to read, he interprets what it is to keep the faith by the last two verses of the eighth chapter of Romans. "I am persuaded that neither death, nor life,

nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creation, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord." They tried to separate him. They try to separate us. They had failed. Shall they succeed with us?

Things present. There are a great many of them to-day. We are surrounded with beautiful things, luxurious things, enticing and attractive things. It is not so easy to keep spiritual life in a world so full of rich civilization as it is in a world of comparative poverty. It was a great deal easier for a Puritan to keep his spiritual faith in England in 1621 than it is for the son of a Puritan to keep it in this year of grace (1898) in New York and Brooklyn. Because it is easier to keep faith when faith is your only refuge, and all around you is howling wilderness and privation, than it is to keep faith with luxury and ease and comfort enticing you and environing you.

It is not only things present that overcome our faith, but it is the future also; future fears, future hopes, future ambitions, future expectations. And it is life; life with all its activities. Who is there in this congregation who has not sometimes almost wished for the old monastic peace—who has not sometimes desired to go into a retreat? Who has not said to himself, if I could only shut off the activities of life and shut myself up in a closet and give myself to prayer and Bible reading? But to be a saint in Wall Street, in the court-room, in politics, in society, in the afternoon reception, to be a saint here in New York, just as New York is to-day, that is difficult. It is a difficult struggle when all life tugs at our shoulders, to be true to Christ and ourselves; in the midst of life to keep our faith. All our life is battling. And there are some—they are not here to-day, but they belong to us—whom



weakness is undermining and sickness is laying siege to, who are steadily drifting down towards the doors of death, to whom life seems never so sweet as it seems now, as they are beginning to take their departure, and who look at those great gates, which may be pearly on the other side, but are dark granite on this, and wonder whether they have fought the good fight, and whether they can keep the faith.

All this experience Paul in lesser measure knew. He lived also in a luxurious age and knew what it was to have difficulties in his life to rob him of his faith. He lived midst perils and hopes, and knew what it was to have future fears to imperil his faith. He lived in a time of tremendous activity (no hider in masked solitude was he, but in the midst of life), and knew what it was to have life keep him so busy that he hardly had time to think of faith, and knew what it was, once and again, and yet again, to face death and wonder into what the portals would lead him. He kept the faith: the clear vision of the Eternal, the transcendent appreciation of the Eternal, the enthusiasm for the Eternal, the love for the Eternal, the Divine, the Everlasting Father, the Christ of God. And keeping it, he looked up for the coronation—not a reward for righteousness, but a crown of righteousness, when he should awake and be satisfied because he should awake in the likeness of Christ and see Him as he was. And do you know, my friends, to whom this coronation is promised? To men that have won the victory? No. Only to men who have fought the fight. The reward alike to the men who fought at Bull Run and the men who fought at Appomattox Court House. Only denied to the cowards and the cravens that ran away. Though you lie wounded, though you have been beaten down again and again, though you are in hospital, bedridden, where it seems as

though you could do no more fighting, if still you have at heart the purpose to fight the battle to the end, coronation shall be yours. To those who have won the race? No, not to those who have won the race—to those who have finished the course. If you have fallen out by the way, grown discouraged, and abandoned it, or grown self-conceited, and said, I am wholly sanctified, I do not need to try any more, there is no promise for you; but for the man who finishes the course, who keeps on, though he be lame and paralyzed and broken down, still holding on, though he be the last in all that run the Olympian game, he shall have the coronation. To those who have kept righteousness, to those who are pure and holy and sinless? No. To those who have kept the faith, to those who still believe in righteousness, to those who still hold fast to it, to those who still love it, and would give themselves to it, to those who have both kept faith with God and faith with themselves, and to those who love his appearing and long for the time when the kingdom of righteousness shall come in and His will shall be done, cost what it may to us, and His kingdom come, not ours, and His glory be revealed, not ours. God help us so to live, that when we do look back, as in that last day we all shall, we can look back with a memory that says, I have at least fought a good fight, I have at least kept up the course to the end, and whatever else I have lost, I have held at least to my faith in God and in righteousness.

## THE HOPE THAT IS IN ME.

*" \* \* \* be ready always to give an answer to every man that asketh you a reason of the hope that is in you, with meekness and fear.  
(I. Peter, iii. 15.)*

I AM going to try this morning to comply with that direction—to speak to you, in some sense peculiarly, out of my own experience ; and if the autobiographical nature of this morning's discourse gives it a certain egotistical tinge, I trust to your charity to pardon that fact. I do not think by nature I am an over-sanguine man ; but I am full of hope. And if I tried in some measure to define that hope to myself and to you, talking to you gathered here much as I might talk to an individual who came to me in my study, saying : Give me a reason for your hopefulness, I should say, first of all, that my hope is in a good God ; in a Being who is, in some sense, at the center of the universe, ordering, directing and controlling it ; in a good God, whom the longer I live the less I understand and the better I know ; a good God, who will bring order out of chaos, and moral order out of moral chaos, who will bring, at the last, victory to the right. And because I have this hope in a good God at the center of the universe who orders and controls it, and who means to accomplish righteousness and will at the last accomplish righteousness, I am not discouraged by defeats. I can as little doubt the tendency of human life because of occasional lapses and defeats as I

can doubt the course of a river because of the eddies along its bank, or as I can doubt the ultimate issue of spring by a snow flurry in May. My hope for the progress of the human race, or the progress of liberty, of education, of virtue—in one word, of all that goes to make up character, does not rest primarily in the progress achieved in the past ; it does not rest primarily in my faith in men as men ; it rests primarily in my faith that there is a good God at the center of the universe who orders and directs life, who out of chaos will bring order, out of moral chaos will bring moral order, out of war will bring peace, out of confusion will bring accord—yea, out of sin will bring the victory of righteousness.

This hope of mine is not founded on reason. I am going to give reasons for it this morning, but I have not argued it out and created it by the process of logical construction ; it lies deeper than that ; it is wrought into my very nature ; it has grown out of my experience ; it is a part of my very consciousness. If you were to ask me how do I know that there is a good God, I think I should have to answer you by asking you how do you know that there is a good man ; how do you know that there is a good wife, or a good mother, or a good friend. If, indeed, some one were to come to you and say, half in honest skepticism and half in taunting, why is your wife more to you than any other woman ? Why do you love her ? Your first answer would not be the service she has rendered. You have not been keeping through these years a debit and credit account, charging her with the mishaps and crediting her with the excellences and striking a balance in her favor. That is not the reason you love her. If some one should come and ask you for a reason for your love you would have to stop and think, and you would remember how she watched you in time of sickness ; how patient she had been to you in



times of your impatience ; how she stood at your side in the time when the burden came and helped you to bear it ; how she inflamed your heart with courage when you were half inclined to retreat ; how you have been enabled to hold to higher standards of purity and honor than you would have held had you not that wife at your side, and so you would be able to give an account. But you do not base your love on any such conscious account. That love is wrought into your experience. You love her, though you may know not why, until some one asks you why. So, in my conscious experience, I trust and love the good God. But I have to stop and think and calculate if I am going to give an answer to one who asks me for the reason of my hope. And yet I do not think my hope is unreasonable—that is, unable to give a reason. We Christians believe in Christ and in God, not because we have reason. But having our faith, and being asked why we have it, and having our hope, and being asked why we possess it, we ought to be able to answer that question to ourselves and to any who may ask us.

There will be, indeed, some in this congregation this morning—wives and mothers some—who will think that I am raising more doubts than I am answering. Perhaps you are right. And yet, mother, who know you hope and never have asked yourself why you hope, your child is asking it. They cannot go to school or college, they cannot enter into the strife of business, they cannot come into the temptation of life without being impinged upon by those who have no hope and who doubt the reasonableness of their hope, and are not moved by the simple answer of the mother who says I have hope. You need to be able to give an answer to the boy or the girl who asks you a reason for the hope that is in you. It is not enough to have the hope yourself. And yet I say again, the hope is



not founded on reason. We have not built it up by the process through which I am going this morning. There will be some of you who will go away from this morning's service shaking your heads and saying, I cannot build up my hope by any such process as the preacher has gone through to-day. And you will be right; you cannot. I am not trying to build a hope, I am trying to show that the Christian's hope is not contrary to reason. You see the difference, do you not ?

In one way, the process I am going through is one I have often gone through with myself, and still have to, sometimes. When I was a boy at college I doubted everything—no, not quite—I think I never doubted that there was a God, and I think I never doubted my own immortality, but everything else was either swept away or involved in fog, and for a little time I steered my life as yesterday the steamers steered their way in New York harbor, not by any light, but by bells and signals I heard from other lives. It is a good way to steer if you have not light yourself.

I have hope, then, that there is a good God at the heart of the universe, and that he is working out good, not evil, and the end of His work will be victory for righteousness and peace. I ask myself, Is this a reasonable hope? And I look out into nature and life to see if it be reasonable. And what first we see, when so we look out into nature and life to see if this hope be reasonable, is that there is an intellectual order in the universe. That is certain. If there were no intellectual order in the universe we could not think about it; we could not trace its processes nor its laws. Science is not a mere gathering of phenomena and throwing them into one great heap together ill-assorted. Science is not a mere assorting of phenomena in different pigeon-holes and with different labels. Science is the discovery of the intellectual relations which already exist

in phenomena, and if there are no intellectual relations there can be no perception of intellectual relations. There is an intellectual order in the universe. That is certain. In other words, we are not in the presence of a great variety of phenomena, we are in a universe—a variety that is unified; a variety that circles around some one great center. Conceive a blind man studying astronomy, through the instructions of a professor who should tell this blind man how the planets, among them our earth, move around a common center, held to that center by one central orb, and the blind man looking up into the heavens and seeing nothing, could only feel a warmth, you would get an illustration of the scientific argument for the existence of God. All things move around a common center, and there is some one, or somewhat, if you will, in that center, and though your eyes are blind and you look up and you see nothing, you feel a warmth at least, and you know, or may if you will, that there is a central Orderer, or there could not be any universe, only a great collection of unrelated phenomena.

And as there is an intellectual order in the material universe, so there is a moral order in the world of men, impinged upon by disorder, broken in upon by fragmentary and disobedient wills—but a moral order. It is not more certain that there are laws of harmony which discord violates; that there are laws of taste which ugliness violates; that there are laws of wisdom which folly violates—these are not more certain than that there are laws of righteousness which sin violates. We do not create these laws of right and wrong any more than we create these laws of harmony, these laws of beauty. The organist does not produce harmony, save as he plays in accord with laws of harmony that are infinite, eternal, inaudible. The artist does not achieve beauty, save as he understands

the invisible and uninterpreted laws of beauty and learns how to express them. And it is not more certain that there are these laws of beauty and of harmony than that there are laws of righteousness. Our whole society is based on this—our government, our family, our social life, our industrial life, everything. Deny the existence of moral laws and there is chaos in humanity; no longer a history; no longer a sociology; no longer a moral philosophy; no longer an organism; no longer anything—chaos. And so I know that there is a moral order in the universe, as I know that there is an intellectual order in the universe of matter. It is. I do not create it by my imagination; it is not the product of my brain. I find it. It is discovered, not invented.

More than that, science and philosophy are making it clear that the moral order of the universe and the intellectual or material order of the universe is an ordered progress. This is what evolution means—ordered progress; development from poorer to richer, from lower to higher, from less to greater—progress. In the material universe, progress to higher forms; in the moral universe, progress to higher life. We are living in a material universe under an intellectual order, in a moral universe under a moral order, and in a material and moral universe whose law of order is a law of constant progress. Growth—that is the last word which science has to utter, the last word which philosophy has had to utter. It is true there is much that seems inconsistent with growth, and many obstacles and recessions and lapses. It is true that growth fights its way against obstacles, but it is also true that the fight is the means of the growth; that the struggle for existence is the condition of the survival of the fittest, and the struggle for others is the condition of the survival of the best—those most worth surviving. An

intellectual order—a moral order—an ordered progress; this is the verdict of science and philosophy concerning life.

And then, still in my questioning whether my hope in a good God at the center of the universe is a reasonable hope, a hope able to give a reason for itself, I turn and look within. And if I am sure of anything respecting myself, I am sure of my own personality. I am sure that I am. I am sure that I am something more than a machine. I am sure that at the center and heart of my being is a will that can control, and a conscience that can exercise judgment, and an intellect that can understand. And I am sure that there are influences about me which help and strengthen me when I desire to walk in the path of progress and of righteousness. I am sure that there are other influences than those I see, and the pulsation of which I can feel, and the nature of which I can interpret. I am sure, in other words (to use Matthew Arnold's phrase), "That there is a Power not myself that makes for righteousness."

Is this, perhaps, my fancy, the fancy of my imagination? Has it been something that has been educated in me by a pious mother and a devout and godly father? It is the most universal phenomenon in human consciousness. There are many men and many women who have no sense of beauty; many who have no sense of musical sound; many who have no good judgment to discriminate between the wise and the foolish; but it is hard to find a man or a woman who has not a sense of rightness and wrongness, and a sense of power on behalf of rightness which they can prove and test if they choose to lay hold upon it. And this consciousness of righteousness and this consciousness of a somewhat or a some one that is a power on behalf of righteousness, is the most universal con-



sciousness, on the whole, in human history. It is true that this sense of a power bringing help and strength comes through many phases and in many interpretations. All the more evidence of the reality. If there were but one voice, if it spake with but one utterance and in one dialect, if it showed itself in one form of experience only, we might well think it was one single human quality, handed down from father to son through successive generations. But the very variety of the dialect is witness of something outside of man that speaks. It is a Jehovah that speaks in thunderings and lightnings to Moses. It is a Glorious Presence that speaks out of the cherubim to Ezekiel. It is an apparition that speaks out of the clouds to Paul. It is a voice that speaks unheard in the heart of Jesus Christ. It is a voice that speaks seemingly in audible utterance to the ears of Luther. It is a voice that summons Buddha from his luxurious palace to the life of self-sacrifice. It is a demon of Socrates inspiring him to nobler and diviner utterance, and carrying him through the portals, which still to him are dark, to a great unknown that lies beyond. In all these, and innumerable forms, it speaks. Who of you in this great audience have not sometimes heard this voice? In your childhood, in your manhood. Perhaps speaking even with clearer and louder voice—certainly so if you have followed where it leads; perhaps showing itself in brighter and brighter apparition—certainly so if you have been obedient to the Heavenly vision; perhaps growing dimmer and dimmer as life goes on; perhaps speaking in lower and lower tones, not because the voice grows feebler, but because the ears are stopped or deafened.

An intellectual power at the heart of the material universe; a moral power at the heart of the world of men; a voice that speaks to men in their conscience, to their courage, to their hope, to their life. And still I am as the



Greek who worships at the altar of an unknown God, or as the Jew who stands in the outer court and sees the heavy veiled curtain concealing the Holy of Holies, or as the Egyptian who in his temple sees inscribed over the inner court, "Who is he that shall draw aside my veil?" I wonder is there any better interpretation of this good God in human history than I get in the broken voices I hear in my own soul, any better interpretation than the broken voices I hear in the voices of poets and prophets of all ages and all times, any better revelation, any better unveiling or disclosure than in the lives of men who have lived about me, with the good and the evil so intermingled that I know not how to draw the line or make the sharp distinction.

And then (not that this is the way I built up my hope, I remind you again—I am not trying to tell you how my hope came to me, but how I reasoned it out afterwards when man after man came to me with the question, "What is the reason for the hope that is in you?"—I turn to this Book and I read the story of this Christ life. Did any such man live? I do not ask that question yet. Is there any historical evidence that the Four Gospels are true? I do not ask that question yet. I am like one who walks through a great picture gallery, looking at portrait after portrait, until at last I come to one and stop there, and that portrait transcends all other portraits I have seen yet, and I stop and study it. Such a portrait as this has never before hung on wall; true or false, historical or not historical—Jesus. And as I read the story of that life these three things stand out pre-eminent in it:

First. Here was one who had in his consciousness the sense of the Divine with transcendent power. He bore the same testimony that Socrates did to his demon; that Moses did to his Jehovah; that Ezekiel did to the splendid cherubim; that Paul did to the flaming apparition on the road

to Damascus ; that Luther did to the voice that spoke to him : that I do to the voice that speaks to me.

Second. Under the inspiration of this voice, guided by it, directed by it, controlled by it, mastered by it, he lived a life of love—absolute, unsullied, quiet love, unhindered by passion, unchecked by selfishness, unpolluted by irritableness or ungodly life ; a life of love in service, of love in service wrought in sacrifice, of love in service wrought in sacrifice culminating in death. Is there any higher conception of goodness than that? I can find none. I look in life—I can see nothing better than this : Love, service, sacrifice. I look in nature—I can conceive nothing better than this : Love, service, sacrifice. It is the whole trinity of noble living. All that is worthy in life is in those three words—love—service—sacrifice.

It was a strange life, and marked by strange phenomena. We call them miracles. He turned water into wine. He fed five thousand with two loaves and five small fishes. He walked upon the water. He healed the sick with touch or word. He rose from the dead. What am I to think of these? My faith in Him does not depend on the answer to that question. It does not, indeed, seem strange to me that so transcendent a being should have possessed and manifested transcendent powers—that on the one hand. It does not seem strange to me that He should have been misunderstood and misinterpreted by His followers, and some things attributed to Him which He never did—that on the other. Nor am I anxious to draw sharply the line and determine what stands on one side this line and what on the other. He said to His disciples : “ Believe me that I am in the Father and the Father in me, or else believe me for the very work’s sake.” I accept the first alternative. I believe that the Father was in Him, and He in the Father. I do not believe Him for the very work’s sake.

I believe in the works because I believe in Him, not in Him because I believe in the works.

And as I look on this life and as I study it—and now for forty years at least I have been making it the center of my study—the Bible the book I have studied most, the New Testament that half of the Bible which I have studied most in the Bible, the life of Christ that portion of the New Testament which I have studied most in the New Testament, with such time, such patience, such interest and such enthusiasm as I could command—and the more I have studied it the grander His life has seemed to me, the more and more transcendent, the more and more wonderful, until it seems to me no longer unreasonable—once I thought it was, or, at least, wondered whether it was—it seems to me no longer unreasonable to believe that this good God, who has created the intellectual order in the material universe, who has created the moral order of the moral universe, who has spoken in fragmentary and broken voices and shown Himself in shadowy lights, reflections from a mirror seen darkly in human experience, has shown Himself to the world of men in this one central, splendid, lowly life.

I trace subsequent history. I find it recorded in this life of Christ that He said, "I will return again ; I will be with you ; I will never leave you ; I will be your companion ; I will be your strength." I find in this Apostolic history that His disciples believed that He had arisen, that He might come back and be with them and companion them and be their strength. If so, there should be some sign of it in human history. If this transcendent figure has been walking down the ages He must have left some footprints ; He must have left some sign of His presence. I turn to the pages of secular history to see what I can see, and this is what I see : Gradually, wherever He has been known and loved and honored, the world growing

better ; the enslaved set free ; schools established ; old men and feeble children no longer turned off to die as useless, but hospitals built for them ; the crazy no longer looked upon as hated of God and to be despised of men, but asylums constructed for them ; nay, criminals no longer only flogged or put out of life, but penitentiaries and reform schools built for them that they may be brought back to a better life and a better mind. I see war gradually ameliorated. I see captives taken in war no longer slaves. I see nations even compelled to find some excuse for war other than the mere desire for plunder, which was all the excuse they needed in the olden time. The sun rises very, very slowly, the shadows still darken the valleys, the clouds still obscure it, and sometimes I almost wonder if it will not sink again in its orbit in the east and leave the world in darkness ; but, on the whole, looking down along the centuries, I can see the world is growing wiser and better and nobler and truer wherever the Christ has been loved and honored. And then I look about me, and wherever I find men, not merely professing His name, but where I find men and women really loving Him, really trying to honor Him, really recognizing Him as Lord and Master, I find love transcendent. The tears they still weep in the presence of death are no longer the bitter, scalding tears they once were ; they are like pearls, radiant every globe of them. The followers of the Christ still fall into sin, still drop out of life and back into death, and yet they rise again with a new courage and a new hope. And the men and the women whom I like to meet ; the men and the women the grasp of whose hand means something to me ; the men and the women whose eyes look up into mine ; whose faces are radiant and give me cheer are not mere Congregationalists, not mere Ecclesiastics, not merely those who profess some special creed, but those who, in one form



or another, are really trying to follow this Christ and really love and honor Him.

And then I come back to my original question, Is there a good God at the heart of the universe ? Is He really ordering the world of nature and the world of men ? Is He bringing order out of chaos and peace out of war ? What is the alternative ? That there is no order ; that this wonderful world in which we live is as some gigantic dice-box held in some unintelligent hand with the dice thrown down upon the table and all the ordered universe the issue of that one throw ; that there is no moral order in the universe ; that every man is set over against every other man ; that there is no secret in life except struggle, struggle, battle, battle, selfishness, selfishness, no solidarity and no unity of society, of family, state, nation, community, humanity. Or it is this : If there be a God who has ordered nature and who has ordered the world of men, He does not care to show Himself ; He hides himself, keeps Himself concealed, stirs in men the strong passion to find Him, stirs in men that longing which our choir interpreted for us a few moments ago, makes men pant after him as the heart panteth after the waterbrooks, makes men cry out to Him, "O God, my God, when shall I come before Thee ?" and then always hides Himself. Oh, cruel, cruel God if this were so ; oh, cruel cruel creed which teaches us to think so of Him.

And so I put these two views of life before myself, a life without order in the material universe, a life without order in the moral universe, or a life at least without love at the heart of it, and then this other view—Love at the heart of the universe, Love that has ordered the world, Love that is ordering the life of men, Love that is directing a splendid progress, Love that has revealed itself in the one incomparable glory of the one incomparable life—Love that



has done all this that He may reach and bring all men at last in to the arms of His love and crown His love with victory.

And from this study of the universe, of the world of men, of human history, of the character of Christ, I come back to my hope—there is a good God at the heart of the universe ; He has ordered the world of matter ; He is ordering the world of men ; He is revealing Himself in human history ; he speaks to human conscience and human life. And when men say to me, If He were all powerful why did not He make a better world ? That does not trouble me. I do not know that he could have made a better world. I do not know that virtue would be possible without vice. I do not know how virtue could be possible without the possibility of vice. Only I know this : That the hope which has grown up in my heart (I know not how), and the song which has sung itself in my heart (I know not whence), and the hope which has led me on through all these years, like the pillar of cloud by day and the pillar of fire by night, come I know not how into my horizon, is a reasonable hope and a right ordered song, a wisely guiding pillar, and I press forward in the strong assurance that when life's history is over the kingdom of God and not the kingdom of the devil will be established in the world, and His will, not the will of innumerable myriads of men, all willing different things will be accomplished in the world, and his will will be done, in me, and I shall awake in His likeness, my battle ended, His victory won.

## THE SECRET OF CHARACTER.

*"Which were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God."*

*(John, i. 13.)*

IN these words John deals with the sources of character. "Christ," he says, "came unto his own, and his own received him not. But as many as received him, to them gave he power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on his name : Which were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God." Four sources or springs of character, four grounds of expectation of human development, are put here in contrast. Let us look at them :

True character is not born of blood. It does not depend upon inheritance. Men are neither great nor good merely because they have a great and good ancestry. The value of a nation does not depend, fundamentally and finally, on its past history, nor on a race. History abundantly demonstrates that. When John wrote these words the Jews prided themselves on being children of Abraham. They were born of good blood—and that was enough. And nobody could compete with them in character or in the race for acceptance with God, because they were born of Abraham. "We be children of Abraham," said the Jews to Christ. This was enough. At the time these words were written there were other men who said : "We

be Romans." That was enough. "I am a Roman," was the proud boast and the adequate boast. There was nothing more to be said. This was the final, the complete, claim. And yet the Jewish nation has disappeared as a nation, dispersed among all races. And the Roman nation has disappeared, broken down, though out of its roots has grown a new race and a new nation. The Englishman is proud of being an Englishman. That is enough. The Englishman's national and personal pride are the subjects of numerous jests, and the satires, often originating with one of his own people, are significant of a real sentiment among our insular brethren. And we laugh at it. We do not think it is enough to be a Jew, or enough to have been a Roman, or enough to have been an Englishman. But I wonder if there are not some of us who think it is enough to be an American. The same pride of race crosses the ocean and crosses the centuries, and you hear it here to-day—"the American idea," "the American civilization," "the American church," "the American religion," "the American education," "the American democracy,"—put the stamp "American" on anything and it is all right. No higher praise to be given anything than that it is American; no stronger condemnation of anything than that it is un-American. Now, too, we are beginning to trace our lineage back. We are sons of the Puritans. We are sons of the Revolution. We are sons of the Mayflower. And some of us are getting across the ocean and trying to find ourselves as sons of families back of the Mayflower.

John says character does not depend on inheritance. Inheritance is valuable; it has its place; but it is not the foundation of character. A man may be a child of Abraham and be degenerate; he may be a Roman, and be base; he may be an Anglo-Saxon, and be mean; he may be an Englishman, and be vicious; and he may

even be an American, and go to pieces. Not only that, the whole race of Jews, and the whole race of Romans, and the whole race of Englishmen, and the whole race of Americans may go to pieces, if all that they depend upon is that they are born of good blood.

Good blood does not make character, and bad blood does not destroy it. I shall never forget the conversation I had some years ago with one of the best experts in insanity in this country. He said to me (and the declaration startled me), "Insanity is never inherited." And when I expressed my surprise, he repeated this affirmation: "Insanity is never inherited." And I said: "What is inherited?" He replied, "A man may inherit such weakness that he will be liable to insanity. But when a man comes to me and says: 'My father was insane and my grandfather was insane, and I am afraid I am going to be insane,' I say to him: 'My dear sir, you are the man that ought not to be insane, for you have a warning; you know against what you need to guard; you know how you need to guard yourself.' The man whose father and mother and grandfather and grandmother were insane is just the man that ought not to go insane, for he knows what are his weaknesses, and he knows how to guard himself against them. No man ever inherits insanity."

No man ever inherited sin. There is not any original sin. Men inherit appetites and passions, they inherit temptations, they inherit weaknesses and frailties and infirmities, but they do not inherit sin and they do not inherit virtue. Virtue cannot be handed down from father to son. Character cannot be so wrought that it may be easier for your son to keep from falling into sin. Weakness may be handed down, so that it will be easier for your son to fall into sin, but virtue is victory by the individual himself over temptation that assails himself, and the



victory cannot be won by another and the defeat cannot be suffered by another. Men are neither born sinners nor born saints. Character does not depend on blood.

It does not depend on the will of the flesh. Flesh, as that term is used in the New Testament, especially by Paul, means the animal man. Character does not depend upon a strong, virile, vigorous, stalwart will in the man himself. The value of government does not depend on strong will, by a king, by an aristocracy, nor yet by a democracy. There was a strong government in Rome, and Rome went to pieces. There was a strong government in France and that went to pieces. Strength of will in an enthroned power exerting itself over the community does not make a strong, safe, permanent, enduring government. I do not know how many years ago (half a century or more) De Tocqueville said : "The peril to America is in the great cities," and unless America has an armed force, independent of the cities, by which it can keep order in the cities, I foresee the destruction of the American republic from municipal populations. A strong military force, independent of the cities, ruled by the state or ruled by the nation, and exercising authority over the cities, will not prevent the destruction of the nation from foreign and disorderly populations in the cities. Build your buildings for the soldiery as large as you please, make them strong, make the windows as narrow, fill them with soldiers as well trained, all that may be necessary for protection from imminent and impending peril, but that will not save the nation. No nation ever yet was saved by a bayonet. No nation ever will be saved by a bayonet. No military force can protect a nation permanently from the disorder and disaster of anarchy. The remedy must go down deeper. A strong will and a strong man to exercise the strong will cannot make a nation safe.



It will not make the home safe. There are plenty of fathers who think that the family will be safe if they only govern their child well. "Govern a child in the way he should go" is the way they read the passage, "and when he is old he will not depart from it;" and they do govern him in the way he should go, but he does depart from it. It has been the common experience of families over and over again. I do not say that children should not be governed, but unless the father can do something else than govern the child he is a failure. It is not enough to keep the boy off the street; you must make him wish to stay off the street. It is not enough to keep him in school; you must make him want the school. It is not enough to prevent him from smoking or drinking; you must make him hate self-indulgence and sensuality. You must make the life and the power within work out. You cannot save him by anything that is from without working inward. You cannot do this in the nation; you cannot in the family.

These two processes, power working from without in restraint, power working from within developing, were set in marked contrast in the last century. France was threatened by revolution, and England was threatened by revolution. The same forces exactly were boiling in England as in France, and France had a standing army and a Bourbon king and a military power, and France exploded. England had no such military force to overawe its own population, but it had a Protestant church, and it had the Wesleyan movement, and it had a great educational movement going on within its boundaries, and England developed out of the very Chartist elements a larger and a better and a nobler life. We did not restore the Union when Lee surrendered at Appomattox Court House, we only got a chance to restore the Union. If after that surrender South Carolina and Georgia and Alabama and Mississippi had still held their

old grudge against the North, if no free schools had been built up, if no commerce had pressed in, if no manufacturing had followed, if there had been no rebanding together man with man, if we had followed the civil war with executions and kept the bad blood in our veins we should have had a dissevered nation, although one flag had floated over us. You cannot make a nation one with a cordon of forts and an armed band. Appomattox Court House gave us the chance ; but it was the school, the missionary, the merchant, the manufacturer, the traveling agent, the salesman, the whole life of the North poured out into the South, that knit together the dissevered Union and made the nation one.

What is true of the nation and of the family is true of the individual. The strength and the hope of the individual is not in a strong, stalwart will. It is a good thing to have a strong will. Woe to the father who says : " I will break the will of my boy." He had better break his back. A boy without will would better die than live. But, nevertheless, no man is saved, to use the theological phrase, no man is made a man, large, strong, rich, full, splendid, by the possession of a strong will. He may be kept from certain forms of vice and iniquity, but that does not make a man. A strong will is like the armor that soldiers used to wear in the olden times. If he only went into battle with the armor on, he might not get killed, but he would do nothing. He must have a strong arm as well as a strong armor. A man with a strong will may be a righteous man, but he will not be a good man. A man with a strong will, and nothing else, may be a conscientious man, but he will not be a holy man ; he will not carry with him the pervasive, sunny, brooding, inspiring influence which comes from the fountains of life which spring up within the soul itself.

The hope of society and the hope of the individual is not in being born of blood (that is, good inheritance), nor being born of the will of the flesh (that is, strong will), so neither is it in being born of what John calls the will of man. The will of the flesh is man simply as an animal, strong, vigorous, determined, resolute. But man is higher than that; he is a domestic man, he is a cultivated man, an educated man; and the modern equivalent of this phrase: "will of man" would be perhaps education. John says the world cannot be saved by inheritance, the world cannot be saved by strength of character, the world cannot be saved by education.

That is the modern panacea. Go to, we will have an educated people. Then it will be all right. It is foolish to do wrong. Therefore we will make men rational, and then they will cease doing wrong. We have borrowed that philosophy from ancient times and imported and incorporated it here, and now not a few say we can get along without churches, without Bible, without worship, without religion, without higher institutions, because have we not the public schools and (heaven save the mark!) the public press. Teach men to read and write, then they will be saved. Educate them, they will see it is folly to do wrong, and they will cease doing wrong. That is the argument. Does it succeed? Huxley (I do not quote his words) says that the serpent was the subtlest of the beasts of the field, and we all know what came of that experiment at the beginning of the race. Education is not a panacea. Equip a man with all the powers with which education can equip him, and you simply give him power with which he can carry on selfishness more skilfully and more efficiently than before. It will put an end to certain forms of sin and put others in their place. The educated man will not pick your pocket, he will only forge your name; he will not steal, he will only

defalcate. He has learned how to do his robbery, his stealing, his sin on a larger scale, and with somewhat less chance of detection. Teach this American people to read and all will go well with it. Well, we do read, we do write. And what is it that we read and write? Take last week. A horrible murder was discovered, and the headless trunk was found floating in the river. One of our modern journals made a picture of the place and a picture of the crowd looking on, and a picture of the trunk, with all the marks to show where the head was taken off and what limbs were gone. Another journal interviewed one who had committed a horrible murder only a few months before, and had decapitated the victim and had carried the trunk off in one quarter and the head in another, interviewed him to get his expert judgment as a murderer on the question how this newer murder was committed; and the expert murderer was proud of the interview that had been accorded him. And this is what we are getting by the simple ability to read and write, without the moral ability to discriminate what we read and what we write. We have a little discrimination. It is mostly apparent in our wives and our mothers. They will not have these journals in the house. So out of respect for them we do not subscribe for them, but as soon as we go out of the house we buy them of the newsboys and read them on the trains. There ought to be such a public sentiment in America, and it ought to go forth from the Christian churches, that a man would count himself disgraced if there was seen in his hand some papers, which I will not mention, because I do not care to advertise them. Can you not see whither we are going? Can you not see the tendency of this vile journalism? I do not say we shall reach the result (God grant that we do not!), but cannot you see what it means? First, we have yellow covered stories that tell all awful horrors. When there has



been educated a constituency by that literature and the boys and girls have grown to men and women there grows up a press that elaborates with great exaggeration all suicides, murders, and horrible crimes. Now we are feeding on those. Do you know what comes next? When Rome was no longer satisfied with mimic shows of horror, she made real ones. When she was no longer sufficiently satisfied with the tragic stories, she made actual tragedies, flung over men to wild beasts in spectacular shows that she might rejoice in their agonies. That is the way in which we are walking. You cannot feed children on yellow covered stories without raising men and women that want yellow newspapers; and you cannot feed men and women on yellow newspapers without kindling a passion that will want tragedy in actual life, and will make it when it does not come itself.

The hope of the world is not in inheritance, not in government, not in education; it is in God. Do you know what the duty of a minister is? It is to say the same thing Sunday after Sunday, and try so to say it that people will listen to him and forget that it is an old story while he is saying it. The hope of America, your hope, my hope, is not in inheritance, Sons of the Revolution, Daughters of the Revolution, Sons of the Mayflower, Daughters of the Mayflower, Sons of the Puritans, or in any such thing. It is not in strong government, in politics, or in family, or in vigorous self-will. It is not in public schools, unless the public school learns how to educate the conscience as well as the intellect. It is in God who may use all these, and through all these may speak to the souls of His children. There is no more hope of an Anglo-Saxon race than of a Latin race, unless the Anglo-Saxon race gets nearer to God. There is no more hope for an American people than for a Roman people, unless the American people understand God

better than the Romans did. There is no more hope for a strong government than for a weak government, unless we understand that God is the great Governor and all sanction of law comes from His authority. There is no more hope in an educated people than in an ignorant people, unless their education has taught them right and wrong and God as the interpreter of right and wrong, and God's own nature as the reservoir of all righteousness from which all life and hatred of wrong must come forth.

Two men sit side by side—in this very congregation perhaps. One looks back through a long line of ancestry, father, grandfather, great grandfather, running back across the sea to splendid progenitors in England. My friend, the greatness and goodness of your father will not make you great nor good. Many a great man has had a little son, and many a noble man has had an ignoble son, and you know it. By his side sits another, a child without genealogy. He knows not where his father or his mother came from nor anything of his parentage or his birth. My friend, you need not despair of life. Who knows who was the father or the mother of Moses that became statesman of Israel. Who knows to-day the genealogy of Paul, the greatest philosopher of all time, unless Plato be an exception. Rise up, take God for your Father and in Him have an inheritance that runs beyond all human inheritance. Two other men sit side by side. One strong of will. "I fear nothing," he says. "I smoke to-day, I can cast away my cigar to-morrow. I drink to-day, I can give up drinking to-morrow. I fear nothing; I can walk in life; I am strong." Perhaps you are; I do not know. Being strong, may protect you; but it will not make you a friend, a sympathizer, a helper of another; you must have something deeper and stronger and better than a selfish life for that. By his side sits another weak man. He has resolved again

and again. Again and again he has broken his resolution. His whole life is strewn with broken resolutions. My friends, life does not depend on a strong will; it depends on a divinely enforced will and you can have God for the asking. Side by side sit two other men. One has had his school, his college and his university education, and his post-graduate course, and has gone abroad, and knows two or three languages. And he is equipped. Yes equipped. But what are you going to do with your equipment? That is to be answered by your moral and spiritual nature, and the larger your equipment the worse your life, if you do not know how to use that which you possess. And by his side sits another man who can scarcely write at all and stumbles in his reading. There is one text for you both: Knowledge shall vanish away; but faith, hope and love abide forever. You are measured, not by your learning, but by the use you make of it. The most influential man of all time—think what you may of his divinity—Jesus of Nazareth, was never at a university but one day in his life, and had no other schooling than such as was furnished him by the synagogue school at Nazareth.

Character is not due to inheritance, will-power, culture; it is due to the life of God, wrought by His peace in the soul of man. Born, not of blood—inheritance; not of the will of the flesh-government; not of the will of man—education; but of the God who is brooding the race, of the God who has come into life in Christ, of the God who stands at the door of your heart and your life, saying: "Let me come into you and make you a child of God."

## HELP THOU MINE UNBELIEF.

*"Lord, I believe ; help thou mine unbelief."*

*(Mark, ix. 24.)*

THIS seems to me to interpret the experience of this close of the nineteenth century. It is a strangely commingled cry of faith and unfaith. There is not, on the one hand, the rest and quietness of a clear, simple religious conviction unshaken, unhesitatingly held ; there is not, on the other hand, the base, despicable, self-satisfaction in a life without religious purpose, without spiritual quality. It is a state of controversy and conflict between faith and unfaith. This is its note : "I believe ; help thou mine unbelief."

This quality of the age is interpreted to us by its great poets. For the poet of his age is not only its leader, but in a truer sense still is he its interpreter. Our great poets are religious poets. And yet they are not, for the most part, restful religious poets ; in them religion is seen struggling. We have not, on the one hand, the purely unreligious poetry of Shakespeare or of Pope, nor have we, on the other hand, the unshaken and unquestioning religious faith of Milton or of Dante. We have the poetry of a Clough, in which faith is underfoot and unfaith is triumphant, and yet faith, struggling to overthrow unfaith and rising again. We have the poetry of a Matthew Arnold, in which faith and unfaith are wrestling with each other, and one wonders which will gain the victory. We have the poetry of a Tennyson,



in which faith is struggling to emerge, as the sun struggles to emerge through the clouds that obscure it. And we have the poetry of a Robert Browning, in which faith and unfaith are dramatically represented in tremendous conflict, but faith always victorious in the end. But in no one of them nor in any of our greater American poets, except Whittier, have we the restfulness of faith expressed. Even in our greatest religious poets—Faber, for example—there is the note of conflict, there is the echo of this cry: “I believe; help mine unbelief.”

Or, if we turn from our poets to a larger survey of the world, we see neither rest in religion, on the one hand, nor rest in irreligion, on the other. The age is certainly, in one sense, a religious age. And yet its prophets are not Thomas à Kempis nor Madame Guyon (of pietism and quietism there is very little); on the other hand its prophets are not Thomas Paine nor Voltaire—and though there is a little attempt to echo Thomas Paine and Voltaire, it is but the feeble echo of a past that gets no real hold on human hearts and exercises very little influence on human lives. The church is no longer on its defense against assailants from without, the questionings take place within the church itself. And one of the reasons why men who hold fast to the old creeds and the old confessions do so is because they fear to let them go lest if the symbol be departed from in any respect unfaith will come in and take possession of the church. Those of us who think we are able to discriminate between faith and creed, between life and language, between the spirit and the archaic expression of the spirit, ought to have great charity, great patience, great tolerance toward those who cannot, and who feel that we are the enemies of the faith.

I want, then, to speak this morning to those who are struggling for faith; I want to speak to you as I might

speak to a single person, talking with him in my study. I imagine him before me. He is in despair; life has gone hard with him; he has failed in everything; he is discouraged; he thinks himself of no value. It is in vain to tell him to pray—he does not believe in God; it is in vain to tell him to take hope of the future—he does not believe in immortality, or at least he does not know whether to believe or to disbelieve. The minister is halted at the very threshold of his endeavor; he knows not what to say. Or, perhaps, he has had a faith, the old faith of his fathers, and he can hold it no longer; to the creed to which his mother subscribed he can no longer himself subscribe; and yet he has vaguely a feeling within himself that there is something higher and better than mere material existence. He wishes to believe, but will not make believe believe. He wants to know. He comes to me (how many there are who have) and says, “How do you know there is a personal God? How do you know there is a life beyond the grave? What do you think about Christ, and why do you think what you do think about Him?” He wants some defining of faith, some clear, explicit interpretation of it. Peter, you remember, says, “Add to your faith virtue;” but suppose we have not the faith, what then? The disciples said to the Lord, “Lord, increase our faith;” and He said, “If you had but faith as a grain of mustard seed.” Now, suppose we have not faith as a grain of mustard seed, what then? If there is not a beginning, how shall we make a beginning? If there is not a foundation, how shall we lay the foundation? How shall we start to build faith itself?

In the first place, my friend, begin by having faith in yourself. I think it is a very great mistake, that it has sometimes been taught in religious organizations that faith in God must rest on unfaith in one's self; that one must disbelieve in himself in order to believe in God; that

he must be in a self-abased and self-humiliated condition ; that he must despair of himself in order to lay hold on the Eternal. No, first have faith in yourself. For, if you will consider it, that which is characteristic of this age is not so much unfaith in God as unfaith in ourselves. There is no longer atheism—that is, disbelief in God—there is agnosticism ; it is that I do not believe that I can know God. There is a some one, there is a somewhat, but I cannot understand Him. It is not a belief that there is no God, it is a belief that I have not the capacity to come into personal relations with Him. It is unfaith in one's self.

What is it that stands in the way of moral life? One hundred years ago men did not think drunkenness a vice ; indeed, a man was hardly reputable if he did not get drunk now and then. To-day drunkenness is universally regarded as a vice. But men say, there is no use, you cannot fight drunkenness successfully ; there will always be drunkards, there will always be saloons, it is not worth while to try to fight them. It is unfaith in the moral power of men. Under Charles II. adultery was not thought a sin. Read the dramas—no, do not read the dramas of that age, take my word for it that you would mark and see how vice entered into the conception of men as their very ideals. It was not thought iniquitous that a man should be iniquitous. It is now. But what do men say? It is not worth while to try to fight licentiousness, you can corral it, you can license it, you can restrict it, but you cannot really cure it. We have unfaith in ourselves. We disbelieve that we ourselves are able to cure vice, that we ourselves are able to put down drunkenness, that we ourselves are able to ennoble ourselves, that we ourselves are able to bring in the kingdom of God. We believe there is a kingdom, or ought to be a kingdom, but we doubt whether we can accomplish the end. It is unfaith in ourselves.

And in personal experience it is the same. It is not disbelief that there is an experience, but it is despair of making it personal and real to one's self. Let me read you one short interpretation of this experience of the age from Matthew Arnold :

The thoughts that rain their steady glow  
Like stars on life's cold sea,  
Which others know, or say they know—  
They never shone for me.

Thoughts light, like gleams, my spirit's sky,  
But they will not remain.  
They light me once, they hurry by ;  
And never come again.

What is that? Disbelief in the thoughts? No, disbelief in the power to get them or the power to keep them or the power to live by them. The stars are there, but I cannot see them. The sun shines, but it is clouded. There is a life, but it is not for me.

Now my first word is this : Have faith in yourself. Believe, and act on the belief. You do not know that you are immortal. Very well, do you know that you are not? Act as though you were immortal. Take the highest conception which you can conceive of yourself and act on it. If you do not believe it, live it. You do not know whether there is a God, or at all events you do not know whether you can know Him. You do not know you can pray to Him ; you do not know He will hear you, or that you will get an answer. Try the experiment. Believe the highest in yourself. Believe you have a voice that will pierce the clouds ; believe that you have an eye that will see the Eternal. Set yourself to try what you can do with yourself. You are discouraged ; life has gone wrong ; you have tried



your hand at this and it has failed, and you have tried your hand at that and it has failed; at last you say: There is no use in living, I dare not die, what shall I do! Stand on your feet and begin again. Have faith in yourself; that is the starting-point. Turn to the Bible and see how it was. God comes to Moses, and says: "I have a message for you." Moses answers, "Do not send me, I cannot go." And the first thing God has to do is to put into Moses, not faith in God, but faith in Moses, Moses believes there is a God, and Moses believes that Aaron can take the message, but he cannot. "No," God says, "I want you to have faith in yourself that you can do it—you are the one. He comes to Isaiah, and says, "Whom shall I send," and Isaiah says, "Here am I; send me." He does not have to plead with Isaiah, for Isaiah has faith not only in God but also in himself. He comes to Ezekiel; and Ezekiel, awed by the disclosure of the cherubim, and the firmament and the glory of God, falls prone on his face, and the first word of God to him is: "Son of man, stand on thy feet and I will speak to thee." It is not to the man who is groveling, it is not to the man who is despairing, it is not to the man who says: "I am good for nothing," that God comes; it is not to the man who has no faith in himself that God speaks, it is to the man who believes in himself and in his power and believes he can do something. Have faith in yourself; that is the starting-point.

And then, in the second place, have faith in your fellow-men. Honor all men. There are times when that is about as difficult a command as any in the Scriptures to comply with; but, nevertheless, there it stands. And there is great significance and meaning in it. You can measure humanity by that which is worst in it; you can analyze and analyze men's motives and try moral vivisection on them; you can try to discover interested motives for every good

thing they do, and you can look as little as possible on the good and as much as possible on the evil. You can measure the press by the corrupt press; you can measure the bar by the dishonest lawyers; you can measure the bench by the judges who seem to render evil decisions; you can measure the ministry by the men who dare not utter their honest convictions; you can measure marriages by the divorces; you can measure the Sunday-school superintendent by the one man who now and then is detected in dishonesty and condemn the whole Sunday-school system, because one man has gone to Canada with somebody else's money. You can measure life in that way or you can measure it in the other. You can consider the noble men you have known and the true men and the worthy men and the good things they have done. You can read the corrupt press less and the honest press more. You can see what is right in men—and there is a great deal that is right. You can feed yourself on heroism and purity and truth. You can roll the divorce suits under your tongue as a sweet morsel, if you will, and lose your faith in man or woman, and you can remember the hundreds of happy homes you know and rejoice in domestic peace and domestic purity. You can read history in the same way. You can read only the story of its corruption and its cruelty. You can measure the church in the same way. You can gloat over its persecutions, or you can remember its martyred pages. You can remember the history of William the Silent and Oliver Cromwell and George Washington and Abraham Lincoln; and then when men talk to you with sneer of politicians and statecraft, you can reply that some of the most influential men who ever trod God's earth were statesmen and versed in the art of politics. "If one love not his brother whom he hath seen, how can he love God whom he hath not seen." What a non-sequitur! Yes, it

a non-sequitur, unless there is something after all divine in all men. If you cannot see God, look for Him first in your fellow-men; look for the divine things they do; look for the divine traits and qualities they show. Honor them, those qualities in men.

And then have faith in righteousness. You have tried it, and it does not pay. You have been honest, and dishonest competitors have crowded you to the wall in business. You have been candid in the pulpit, and you have had a quarrel in the church, and have had to leave it, and are without a charge. You have refused to lie in medicine, and you have been turned off and quacks have come in and taken your place. You have refused to resort to mean and underhand tricks in the law, and some man who was willing to resort to mean and underhand tricks has come in and taken off clients from you, and you say righteousness does not pay, honesty does not pay, it is not worth while. When that third officer of the Champagne started with his crew of nine in a life-boat to get help for the steamer, do you suppose he went because he thought heroism paid? Did he have faith that some overruling Providence would so guide and guard and shelter that he would not suffer? He knew he should suffer. Did he think that some overruling Providence would so guide him to his destination, that there would be no danger of death? He took the chance of death. Did the hope for a monument to his memory, his name the idolized of two nations inspire him? It was none of those things. He had faith in righteousness; he had faith in heroism; he had faith in doing his duty. He believed that to do an heroic thing and die for it is better than to live and not have done the heroic thing. He believed that to suffer in heroism was right and to be comfortable and a coward was shameful. Have faith in righteousness. It costs. What would it be

worth if it did not cost ! You have suffered. What is a man worth who does not sometimes choose to suffer ! When in the campaign before Vicksburg Grant called for volunteers for a forlorn hope service, nearly the whole regiment offered, and the question was who should have the privilege. When God calls on men and says : I want some one to suffer for me, some one to show the world how a son of God can bear suffering, and obloquy, how he can carry himself when he is misrepresented and abused ; how he can endure poverty ; how he can live bereft of his wife and children ; how many are there ready to enter his forlorn hope and show their faith in righteousness ? George Romanes, scientist, scholar, student, was beginning to lose his eyesight, and Canon Scott-Holland wrote him this letter :

It is a tremendous moment when first one is called upon to join the great army of those who suffer. That vast world of love and pain opens suddenly to admit us one by one within its fortress. We are afraid to enter the land, yet you will, I know, feel how high is the call. It is as a trumpet speaking to us that cries aloud, "It is your turn—endure." Play your part. As they endured before you, so now, close up the ranks—be patient and strong as they were. Since Christ, this world of pain is no accident untoward or sinister, but a lawful department of life with experiences, interests, adventures, hopes, delights, secrets of its own. These are all thrown open to us as we pass within the gates—things that we could never learn or know or see, so long as we were well. God help you to walk through this world now open to you as through a kingdom, regal, royal, and wide and glorious.

I wonder if in this house this morning there is some one bearing a heavy burden. Of course there is some one. I wonder if there is some one suffering and losing faith in his God and faith in himself and faith in the world of men because he is suffering unjustly. This is my prayer for you : "God help you to walk through this world now open



to you as through a kingdom, regal, royal, wide and glorious."

Have faith in righteousness, and have faith in the Christ who embodies and personifies and represents this righteousness, and this faith in men, and this faith in one's self. You do not know whether He was Divine ; well, pass that. You do not know whether He wrought miracles ; pass that. You do not know whether He rose from the dead ; pass that. You do not know whether he was miraculously born ; pass that. You do not know whether he lived at all ; pass that. Take the picture, read the story, then believe that such a life as He lived is a life worth living ; that such a life as He is said to have lived is a life worth living ; such heroism, such patience, such gentleness, such courage, such life, is the only life worth living. Believe in righteousness and in the life that he lived, and then rise up and try to live it.

And, finally, have faith in the testimony of others who have seen what you do not see and have known what you do not know. We do not all walk by sight. Believe in the good God because men have known Him, though you have not known Him. Did you ever see Gladstone ? Do you believe in him ? Did you ever see George Washington ? Do you believe in him ? Believe on the testimony of others in the spiritual realm as you believe in the other realm. Oh, how in other things we act on the slightest intimation of a witness, and in religion wait to examine and cross-examine ! A policeman last week found a poor unconscious Italian, got him on his shoulder, ran twelve blocks through the sleet and snow, dropped him on the floor of a drug store, and called instantly for the medicine he wanted and poured it down his throat, and the drug clerk did not stop and say : "Are you a doctor ? Have you a prescription ? Where is your evidence ?" but gave the medicine to him ;

and when the doctor came the poor Italian was sitting up, pale and trembling, but restored to life, because one man was willing to act on the counsel and judgment of another man. Last week a fire occurred in Cambridge, and a student was caught by the flames in the fourth story, and his fellow-students spread out a blanket and called out to him to jump. He could hardly see through the flames and smoke, but he sprang from the window sill, and was saved though not uninjured, because he trusted in the word of others. I could go right through this congregation and could call up men and women I see before me and they would say to you: "I know there is a God; I have talked with Him; He has carried my burden; He has carried my sorrow; He has comforted me in it; He has carried my sin; He has taken it away; He has carried my iniquity; He has cleansed it away." Now, you do not know there is not a God. Act on the knowledge of others. If you cannot do anything else pray this prayer of the atheist: "O God, if there be a God, save my soul, if I have a soul." That is better than nothing. It is the cry of a man who wants help.

When those men were tossing to and fro in the boat and saw the steamer pass by, did they know it would stop for them? They did not wait for the proof and demonstration; they shouted and threw up their signals. Here is a long row of witnesses, by the hundreds and the millions, who bear their testimony; He has borne our sins; He has carried our iniquity; He has taken off our burden; He has taken the sorrow out of our heart; He has put a new song on our lips. Run up your signal; you do not know where He is? Throw up your arm; trust the voices of men who say to you that on this great ocean of life where you are tossing and think you are alone, you are not alone. We have been where you are; we have given out our

signal ; the active arm has been reached out to us ; we have been helped.

If you have come here this morning wishing you believed, wishing you had faith, and not having it, do not make believe you believe ; do not try to repeat a creed you do not think is true ; do not try thus to vanquish your doubts. Believe in yourself ; look for the best in your fellow-men ; believe in righteousness, and follow it wherever it leads ; believe at least so far in the Christ as this : believe that His life is a life worth living, and then take the testimony of others, and on that testimony seek help from the great Helper.

## HINDUISM VERSUS CHRISTIANITY.

*"He that hath my commandments, and keepeth them, he it is that loveth me ; and he that loveth me, shall be loved of my Father, and I will love him, and will manifest myself to him."* (John, xiv. 21.)

AMERICA has become missionary ground for other religions. Perhaps instigated by the Parliament of Religions, at all events following upon it we have had foreign missionaries from India preaching the Oriental faith ; and it is said that there are many hundreds, perhaps thousands, who are studying (if the somewhat superficial listening to lectures can be called study) this Oriental religion.

I am glad of it. In the first place, I am glad of it, because I think we have something to learn from Hinduism. Our rushing, vehement, struggling life in America has something to learn from the patience and the quietism of the Orient. And I am more glad of it, because I am glad to have Christianity and Orientalism put side by side in sharp contrast. I should not be sorry to see a Brahmanical temple, a Vedantic school of philosophy and a Mohammedan mosque in the same American city. I should not be sorry to see the Koran and the religious books of India and the Bible put side by side on the same table. If Christianity cannot endure the contrast, then it ought not to live. I believe there is no better way to attest its value than by simply putting Christianity and the other forms of religious faith in the world side by side, each interpreted by its own interpreter.



I am not proposing, then, this morning, to attack or to criticise Orientalism, but to try to do this very thing—to put Orientalism and the Christian religion side by side before you, as far as it is possible to do it within the limits of a single brief discourse.

Orientalism exists in many different forms, and they are very different—Brahmanism, Buddhism, Vedantism, Theosophical philosophy, not to mention others—and they are often confounded, naturally enough, by Americans. But Christianity also exists in many very different forms—Romanism, Lutherism, Anglicanism, Puritanism, Wesleyanism; and these are also very often confounded by our brethren across the sea, naturally enough. I do not propose this morning to speak of Brahmanism or Buddhism or Vedantism any more than I speak of Romanism or Lutherism or Puritanism. There are certain fundamental features which all Oriental religions and all Oriental philosophies have in common, and there are certain fundamental features which all Christian forms of religion have in common, and it is of these common features, and of the contrast between the two that I wish to speak this morning.

In the first place, then, the Oriental religions are what is called pantheistic—the doctrine of all the Oriental religions, and of all the philosophies which pass for religion, are that God is the only reality. This is, indeed, shaped and fashioned in different forms, but it is practically always the same in its result. God is the sum of all phenomena. God is the all and the all are God. That is one form of stating it. Or, God is the only reality, and all phenomena, the varied phenomena of life, are only shadows, unrealities, appearances, semblances. I am not I; I am only a fragment of the Deity, and I only appear to myself to be, while in reality I am not; I am only a kind of shadow, cast out by the Deity. Or, God is the only Eternal, and all phenomena

are emanations that proceed from Him ; they float a little while upon the surface and return to Him again. All men and all material creation are like the foam on the wave ; it rises, then goes down, then is absorbed again into the great eternal flow. In one of these forms or the other all Oriental religions are based on the notion that God is the only eternal reality and that all men and all material things are unrealities, shadows, temporal and transient.

And because God is thus the eternal reality and includes in himself all things, He is without attributes. He is not a person, and He has none of the qualities that belong to personality. He cannot love, because there is nothing for Him to love and nobody for Him to love. He is the all. Were he to love me He would only love Himself. Were He to love you it would only be self-love. He cannot know, for knowledge assumes both the person that knows and the thing that is known ; but there is nothing for Him to know, all things are Himself. There is, therefore, no knowledge apart from Him, in any Occidental and American sense of the term knowledge. There are no hopes in God, and no fears in God, for there is no future, there are no contingencies. He is simply eternal silence, hardly self-conscious existence.

Nirvana or rest. It is a question among scholars whether Nirvana, the Heaven of the Oriental, is existence or annihilation. I think I should define it as unconscious existence. I suspect you do not know what that means ; I do not quite know, I think ; but it is, at all events, somehow to be and yet not to know that one is ; the absence of all desire, of all expectation, of all energy, of all forth-putting, of all things that we call life. And, therefore, here and now, religion is the absence of these things. To be religious, according to the Oriental philosophy, is not to go forth to serve men, it is to meditate. It is to separate one's self from the world, it is to separate one's self from mankind, it is to be absorbed in God. And we are to come into this oneness with God, not by going forth, but by meditating on God, thinking about God, shutting the world off from ourselves, that we may finally be absorbed and brought back into God again. And so, until within the last quarter century at least, this religion never has been a missionary religion. The Oriental religions—if I except Buddhism—never have attempted to make converts ; they have not gone forth, you have noticed, because the very essence of their religion has been not to go forth, but to retreat ; not to go forth, but to remain in perpetual silence. Life is not a going forth but it is being absorbed back into the perpetual silence.

Now over against that conception of religion—God the all, phenomena, including human life, shadows and unrealities, religion an absorption in God, not a forth-putting for service, and Heaven unconscious existence, I wish to put before you, very rapidly and very briefly, the essential elements of Christianity, as they stand in contrast with Orientalism, and the essential element of all forms of Christian faith, as they stand in contrast with all forms of Orientalism.

In the first place, then, our Christian faith—and by our Christian faith I include Jewish as well as Christian, the faith of the Old Testament and the New, the faith of the Hebrew and the Christianized Greek, and the Christianized world—the fundamental faith is, God is love. That is the starting-point. He is not power; He is not thought; He is not pure imagination—God is love. And because God is love, therefore, God is always putting forth from Himself. The Oriental God is absorbing into Himself. The Christian God and the Hebrew God is putting out from Himself. The two conceptions of Deity stand in contrast and antagonism one to the other. It is sometimes said that a Vedantist or a Theosophist can be a Christian. Well, perhaps he can, because a man may be a very good follower of Christ and a very poor logician, but as systems of philosophy they stand antagonistic one to another at the very center and source. The one represents God as taking everything into himself and the final end only God, and the other represents God as pushing out from himself more and more, creating, producing, giving forth. God is love, not absolute thought, not absolute power, absolute beneficence.

And because God is love and God is a living God therefore, there are those whom He can love, and, therefore, He is making those whom He can love. God would not be God if He could not love, and therefore God would not be God if there were not persons separate from Him. Pantheism is not atheism. It is not the same as atheism. It can hardly be said to run into atheism. But in this it is alike with atheism, that it is absolutely inconsistent with the doctrine that God is love. For if God is love, He loves somebody; and if He loves somebody, then there are somebodys that are separate from Him and not fragments of Him. One could conceive of God as existing in the



remote eternity, when there were no angels or archangels, when there were no men or women. Still, like a childless wife, He may love and wait until the time when children are born whom He may take into His arms, and who will fill His heart. You and I, and such as you and I, are essential to the life of God. I desire to say it, though men may call it irreverent; you and I and such as you and I are essential to the life of God. For God is Father, and there is no father if there be no children. Lame they may be and impotent they may be, and foolish they may be, and half-educated they may be, and sinful and erring they may be; but children are essential to the Eternal Father, and there can be no God who loves if there be not men and women separate from God, living by themselves, having their own individual personality, whom He can love and does love.

And because God is love, and is a living God, and has put forth from Himself children whom He may love, He shows them, He reveals to them, He utters to them His love. The God of the Hebrews and the God of the Greeks—that is, as I believe, the God of the whole world, the God who is interpreted to us, if you will, by the Hebrew conception and by the Christian revelation, is a God who not only loves, but interprets, manifests, shows forth His love. The world is not a shadow. You and I are not shadows. There is not a screen on which the false pretense is cast that passes away and is gone. God puts forth all things that through them He may speak His love. Creation is gift-giving. Because it is His nature to be putting forth He made all the world for us and such as we are. He makes it as a man builds a house and gives it to his bride or to his child to live in. It is the testimony of his love.

He speaks of love by deeds. He is a doing God, there-

fore ; not a sleeping and unconscious God. And this doing God is a speaking God, and comes and speaks to the prophets of olden time, to all men that will hear Him, and to the nation that above all other nations on the earth will better hear Him. It hears Him, although it misunderstands Him, it misinterprets Him, it misreports Him. Sometimes it keeps its message to itself and will not give it forth. But still there is the great prophetic nation that gets a conception of a God who is a Father, God who is love, God who is greater because He is love. And to this nation He speaks this love, and through this nation He speaks it to other nations. And then because He is love, and because He is making a nation in love, and because He is showing His love through human experience, that is not enough, and He comes and lives a human life, manifesting Himself in the terms of a human experience, that man may understand what love means. Sometimes we wonder that Christ did not show forth more divine power. Now and then sparks seem to fly from Him for a moment, a force more than human, and to disappear, but on the whole He walked a man like other men. Sometimes we wonder that He did not show more wisdom. Why was it if Moses did not write the Pentateuch, He did not tell us so? Why was it if the Psalms were not all written by David, He did not tell us so? Why was it if the world was to run eighteen centuries after his birth before redemption, and no one knows how many centuries more, He did not tell us so? Strange that He did not know and did not reveal ! And yet, my friends, if He had come with resplendent and dazzling power, if He had come with marvelous and all-speaking wisdom, we should have forgotten the love. Then we should have admired Him for the power ; then we should have admired Him for the learning. Now they are not there ; the one central thing is all that is left, and

it is all that needs to be left; is the one thing we need to know—God is love.

And because God is love, and God is a living God, and God has made His children that He may have some ones that He may love, and because God has manifested Himself and revealed Himself as love to other hearts of love, therefore, religion consists in loving, in serving, in doing things, not in meditating. Religion does not consist in meditating about God, but it consists in living the kind of life God lives Himself. It does not consist in separating one's self from the world, but coming into the world. The central truth of Christianity is the truth of Incarnation; and the doctrine of Incarnation is exactly this: That God comes into the world, and, then, coming into the world, He says to you and to me, "Follow thou me!" The man or woman who goes into a nunnery, monastery or convent, the man and woman who separate themselves from their family or their kith and kin or their race are just in so far acting on the Oriental religion, not on the Christian religion. To be religious is to go into the world and carry in the world the spirit of activity and service and love. The Messiah of the Vedantist is one named Ramakrishna. Let me read one beautiful figure borrowed from his writings:

"So long as the bee is outside the petals of the flower, it buzzes and emits sounds. But when it is inside the flower, the sweetness thereof has silenced and overpowered the bee. Forgetful of sounds and of itself, it drinks the nectar in quiet. Men of learning, you too are making a noise in the world, but know the moment you get the slightest enjoyment of Bahkti (love of God) you will be like the bee in the flower, inebriated with the nectar of divine love."

That is the most beautiful expression I can find of the religion of Orientalism. Stop! and enjoy nectar. But when I turn to the New Testament I find a very different

doctrine. It is this: Get your honey from the flower, and then take it out, carry it forth, hive it, give it to others. Go into the flower that you may get pollen on your wings and go forth to fructify other flowers. Religion is not staying all the time in the flower. It is not being inebriated with spiritual nectar. That is distinctly irreligious; at all events, it is un-Christianity. To be a Christian is not at all to be absorbed in God. That is irreligious. To be religious is to take God into ourselves, and then carry Him out to others. It is to give the nectar to the unfed and not stay and inebriate ourselves with it. We have Orientalism in some of our religious hymns. "I will sit and sing myself away to everlasting bliss"—that is Orientalism; it is not Christianity. To be a Christian is to take the bliss, to take the life, and give it in service to those that need it.

And so a church is not a Christian church that is not a missionary church. If the church is satisfied to come together once a Sunday or twice a Sunday, or six or seven times a week in protracted meeting, for singing, prayer and exultation and exhilaration and absorption in God, it is an Oriental church, it is not a Christian church. It is not a Christian church unless, coming to the sanctuary and getting through the church a larger vision of God, a larger life of Him, a better sense of His love and more of His spirit, it goes forth to carry it to those who need that life and that love, as Christ came forth from God, and as through the eternities God has been coming forth from Himself.

The Oriental figure is this (it is a very common one in the Oriental writings): God the great ocean; from the ocean rises the cloud the cloud falls on the hillside, comes out from the mountain as a spring, flows through rills into the river, flows down the river back into the ocean again and is absorbed. That is the Oriental religion.



And the Christian religion is this: God is a Sun of Righteousness. And from God the sunlight pours out upon the world; and the world itself, in turn, illuminates others; and all the life and all the beauty and all the fragrance and all the sunshine and everything comes from its receiving and giving back the light. Do you know the difference between a diamond and charcoal? They are both carbon. The charcoal absorbs the light and does not give any back. The diamond takes the light and gives it all back. The charcoal is Vedantism. The diamond is Christianity. The one absorbs God and is absorbed by Him. The other takes Him only that it may bestow Him upon others. And so, my friends, if you and I want to find God, if we are Christians, if we believe in this Bible, and not in the Oriental philosophy, our way to find Him is by Christian activities. It is not by getting out of the world, it is not by shutting ourselves up away from the world, it is not by meditating on unworldly things. We are to go where God is—and God is where there is need and trouble and sorrow; we are to be doing the things that God is doing—and God is carrying help and comfort and strength to those who are in trouble and sorrow.

I suppose some of you have been wondering what has become of my text. Let me read it again. "He that hath my commandments and keepeth them, he it is that loveth me; and he that loveth me, shall be loved of my Father, and I will love him, and will manifest myself to him. If a man love me, he will keep my words; and my Father will love him, and we will come unto him, and make our abode with him." Do you want to know what His commandment is? "This is my commandment: That you love one another as I have loved you."

You who are in business sometimes say: "I wish I were a minister and could have the quiet time for medita-

tion ; then, perhaps, I might be a devout man." I will tell you how to get the vision of God. Carry the spirit of love into your counting-room. If you who are a lawyer say : "How shall I find God? I cannot cut myself off from the activities of life." I will tell you how to do it. Remember that God is personified justice, and in the administration of law remember that you are doing divine work in the world, and do it with Him. The baker that distributes bread is as truly working with Christ, if he only knows it, as the preacher who preaches in the pulpit ; for Christ distributed bread to the hungry as well as preached on the mountain top. To be one with God is to love and serve and live, for God is love and service and life.

I am glad the Oriental religions are sending their missionaries. I am glad they are telling us that there is only one God and all things are shadows and that the end of life is absorption into God. And I am glad to put in contrast these two conceptions : God the All ; and God sending forth the all and creating the all that He may love those whom He has created. God absorbing all into Himself ; and God creating personality and enlarging it with His own personality that from eternity to eternity He may love and be loved. Religion, meditation ; and religion, life and love and service. Heaven, eternal, unconscious rest ; and Heaven an eternal life of splendid and ever-increasing activities.

## THE CHRISTIAN BROTHERHOOD.

*"Fear not, little flock ; for it is your Father's good pleasure to give you the kingdom."*

*(Luke, xi. 32.)*

ABOUT eighteen centuries ago, a little band of twelve, with a Leader, who had chosen them to be His companions, were traveling through one of the provinces of Rome. They believed—and in that age it was a radical belief—that there was a good God who ruled the world and was going to bring order out of chaos and righteousness out of wrong. They believed, too, in their Leader, though they did not understand Him. What He said they thought was true ; what He commanded they were ready to obey ; whither He led, they desired to follow. He was surely worthy of their credence ; for He never said anything for effect, never anything simply because He thought it would sound well or do good ; but only what He believed to be the truth, and the absolute truth. He never commanded them except by the enunciation of laws which He interpreted in His own life and character ; He never asked them to go whither He was not willing to lead ; and He never laid on them burdens which He was not ready Himself to carry. They loved Him, though they did not understand Him. It was this Leader who uttered these words to this little band of twelve : "Fear not, little flock ; for it is your Father's good pleasure to give you the kingdom."

It was a wonderful choice, this choice of these peasant men to receive the gift of the kingdom ; wonderful when you consider what that kingdom seemed to be to the Leader who promised it. It was interpreted afterward by one of His disciples: "The kingdoms of this earth shall become the kingdoms of our Lord and of His Christ." Fear not, little flock ; it is your Father's good pleasure to give you the kingdoms of the earth. That was the promise. He made it clear to them. The whole world, He said, is your vineyard ; go, sow everywhere ; go, preach the same glad tidings, the same hope that animates you preach to every creature in every part of the world. You are but the least of seeds, it is true, but you shall grow until at last the organization of which you are the beginning has overspread the world. You are but a little leaven, it is true, hidden away in three measures of meal ; men do not see you, they do not know what is coming from you ; but go, and your agitating presence shall go on and on until it has pervaded the whole world and the whole world is changed by your presence in it.

From that time to this the organization has been growing. The parable has been fulfilled. The little seed has grown to be like a great tree that overspreads the globe. The little band of twelve has now grown to such proportions that it is counted by millions. The little band of twelve that had no purse nor scrip, nor even so much as two changes of raiment apiece when they went forth on their travels, is now endowed with wonderful equipment. There are no edifices in the world more splendid than some of the edifices which this band has constructed. There are no schools of learning better than those which this fellowship has endowed. It has spread over the globe, so that to-day there is scarcely any language in which the praise of this Leader is not sung ; there is scarcely any commu-



nity in which His word is not proclaimed ; there is scarcely any spot on which the sun shines where men do not gather to honor His name, and to strengthen themselves the better to do His service. The influence has gone out from this band and overruns its boundaries. Belief in this Leader, belief in this good God that rules the world is no longer confined within the successors of this twelve. It runs far beyond, so that now it is difficult to tell who are within the fellowship and who are without it, because the creed of this Christian church has become the creed of every Christian community, and the principles of this Christian church are in some measure at least accepted by those who do not pretend to belong to it.

It is true that the prosperity and progress of this fellowship is its peril. It is true that while it has been pushing its influence out into the world, the influence of the world has been pushing itself into the organization. It is true that while the world has been growing more Christian, the church and the press have been growing more worldly, but it is also true that this organization, this band, this fellowship is to-day larger and more splendid in its endowment, in its equipment, in its edifices, and in its influence than any organization that is or ever was upon the globe. It has survived the centuries ; it has survived persecution attacking it ; it has survived schism and controversy rending it from within ; it has survived corruption eating out its vitals at the very heart of it. It is broken up into fragments, apparently, and yet it is really still one ; and though empires have changed, and governments have changed, and civilization has changed, and literature has changed, and the whole world in its very structures and organization has changed through these eighteen centuries, this little band, starting under this Leader, loyal to Him and full of love for Him, not understanding Him, but willing to go where He

led, and to do what He told them to do, has survived all the ages and lives still with the same great essential faith and the same great fundamental principles.

Some of us in this church belong to this band, and some of us do not ; some of us are of this fellowship, and some are not. I want to try to tell you this morning what, it seems to me, are some of the characteristics and features of the little flock, grown to be so large a flock ; what we mean by the church of Christ ; what we are.

In the first place, we have one common faith. I know our creeds differ ; I know that we have quarreled and contended over definitions ; but one faith is common—we all believe, Protestant and Catholic, liberal and conservative, that there is one good God, and that He is the Father of the whole human race, bringing order out of chaos and peace out of contention and righteousness out of wrong. We believe not only that God is, but that God is in His world working out its redemption, and we believe in Jesus Christ whom He hath sent. We understand Him better than the twelve understood Him. We know what He means better than they knew what He meant ; we comprehend both His mission and His character far better than they did. We have come to see in Him the reflection of the Infinite and the Eternal, to understand through His passion, through His suffering, through all the various phases of His life, the life of the Infinite and the Eternal.

We believe, also, that this Christ is a living Christ ; that He is in the heart of His church ; that He dwells with us ; that He is not dead ; that He is still as truly our Leader as He was the Leader of those twelve in their earthly ministry. And we believe that in Him and through Him there is forgiveness of sins. We believe that He is taking the load of iniquity off the world, not only the burden of the past, not only the affliction of the present, but the curse of

the future. We believe that He is washing and cleansing ; that He is redeeming and purging ; that He is emancipating and freeing the world ; that He is lifting it up by slow process, but really lifting it up and making a new created world out of it. We believe in God the Father, in Jesus Christ, whom He hath sent ; in the Holy Spirit, the spirit of God dwelling in the hearts of the children of men, in the forgiveness of sins, in the Holy Catholic Church, the fellowship of the saints, the communion of those who are banded together in this common faith.

It is true—I say again—we differ on many points. Some of us believe in an infallible church, and some believe in an infallible book, and some believe in an infallible reason, and some do not believe in anything infallible. Some are radical, and some conservative ; some are tied more to the past, and some are pressing forward more eagerly to the future. But Catholic and Protestant, liberal and conservative, all hold these great fundamental elements ; there is a good God, a Jesus Christ, whom He hath sent ; a Holy Spirit dwelling in the church, a work of redemption, of up-building, of development, of education, carried on in the world by God, and by the church commissioned to carry it on for Him.

We have a common hope as well as a common faith. The future is ours. We believe in it. We look forward to the time when war shall cease ; when the white-winged squadron shall no longer go forth sailing the sea, carrying their cannon with them to belch fire and destruction ; when armed men shall no longer tramp the earth, organized, only to bring ravage and ruin and despair upon the children of men. We look forward to the time when all the nations shall clasp hands together in a common fraternity, and nation shall love nation as brother loves brother. We look forward to the time when labor shall everywhere be adequately



remunerated ; when, though there may still be poverty, there shall be no pauperism ; when no men shall go hungry or unfed or uncared for ; when wealth shall be so far equitably distributed that everywhere there shall be comfort without the perils of luxury. We look forward to the time when commerce shall no longer be a battle of man against man ; when no longer men shall ill-treat one another and prey upon one another and crowd one another out of the way, as the children crowd one another in Italy when the traveler flings down a handful of coin for them. We look forward to the time when commerce shall everywhere be free, and man shall not reach out his hand except to clasp his neighbor's hand in fellowship, and all trade and all industry shall be mutually helpful and mutually supporting. We look forward to the time when government shall be an endeavor—an honest and a sincere endeavor—by men to find out what righteousness is, and what God's law is, and to enthrone conscience in the nation, and make a social conscience, as now conscience is enthroned in many an individual and made a personal conscience. We look forward to the time when education shall seek only the highest and divinest, and in all its seeking still shall seek after God and God's righteousness. Sometimes we turn to this old book. We read the story of our hope therein. It is no dim, vague, imaginative picture that we read. It is the expression of our strong expectation. "For all the armor of the armed man in the tumult, and the garments rolled in blood, shall even be for burning, for fuel of fire." We look forward to the time when every gunship shall carry peace, and guns no longer ; when it shall be as rare to see a fort at a harbor as now it is to see a portcullis at the entrance of a home ; when it shall be as rare to see an armed troop to protect the nation as it is, in a civilized community, to see a pistol in a hip-pocket to protect an individual. All the armor of



the armed man and all the garments rolled in blood shall be burned in one great bonfire. "For unto us a child is born, and unto us a Son is given, and the government shall be upon his shoulders, and he shall be called Wonderful, Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace." Or, sometimes we turn to our hymn-book and sing of our hope and our aspiration which becomes more than an earnest expectation.

Oh! for the coming of the end,  
The last long Sabbath day of time,  
When peace from Heaven shall descend,  
Like Heaven's own light, on every clime!  
When men in ships far off at sea,  
Shall hear the happy nations raise  
The song of peace and liberty,  
The chant of overflowing praise.  
Mankind shall be one brotherhood;  
One human soul shall fill the earth;  
And God shall say, The world is good  
As in the day I gave it birth.

United with this faith, united in this hope, we are united in our purpose. We have joined together and pledged one another our mutual loyalty in the endeavor to maintain this duty. We have given our pledge of helpfulness one to another. In us still is the spirit of war and greed and selfishness and ambition and pride, and we know it full well. But we have agreed one with another that we will help one another in personal battle. Each one of us will help his neighbor, he will help you, and you will help him, and each of us will help the other to stand strong. We will be more honest in business, we will be more loyal in government, we will be truer in politics, we will be kinder in the household, we will be better men and women, because we

know other people are fighting the same battle, doing the same work, running the same race, giving us their sympathy, as we are giving them ours. We have joined our hands in a common pledge to do what we can for the world. We have united for the purpose of telling others of this Leader, and of this life. We see about us men who are in discouragement and despair ; men who think you must fall into the currents of society and do as society does ; that it is impossible to be honest, divinely honest in commerce, as it is carried on to-day ; men who are under such stress and pressure that they say, It is no use, I must either join in the current or be trampled under foot. And we have joined hands to say, It is false, God does reign, there is a good God, the sunshine is more than the blast, God is more than the devil, goodness and righteousness are more than sin and selfishness. We can and we will conquer, and the kingdoms of this world shall become the kingdoms of our Lord and of His Christ. We come to this promise : " Fear not, little flock ; for it is your Father's good pleasure to give you the kingdom." We remember it was said to the twelve, and now it is said over again to millions, that are no longer a little flock, and we take courage. We have united for this our common purpose that we may hasten the time when there shall be peace in place of war, love in place of selfishness, industry in place of idleness, thrift in place of extravagance, and the spiritual life in place of the sensuous life.

Our homes teach us much. We grow weary of the conflict of life and come back and open that door, and there the wife is trying to carry the husband's burden and the husband is trying to carry the wife's burden ; there the children are seeing what they can do for the father and the mother, and the father and mother are seeing what they can do for the children ; and life is joyous because life is love ; and we look forward to the time when the law of the

household will be the law of the city, the law of the nation, the law of the world. We have that hope. We have the purpose to achieve that hope.

We have a Leader ; not a dead leader, either—a living leader ; a leader who is as truly a leader now as He ever was to the twelve of old ; a leader as loyal to us as He was to them ; a leader who knows a great deal better than we know how far we fall short of His ideal and our ideal ; a leader who understands our successes and our failures ; a leader who is never discouraged or disheartened because of them, who never gives us up when we give ourselves up ; a leader who still companions us and loves us, and is in the midst of us and who still leads us. The story of His life is the story, first of all, of a man ; a man who shows how a man can love and serve, and how a man can die ; and we hear Him in His love and in His service and in His death, saying : “ Follow thou me ! ” and we believe there is no life He has enriched we cannot enrich, no achievement He has accomplished we cannot accomplish, nothing which He has been we cannot be. He who healed the sick, He who preached the gospel, He who fed the hungry, He it is who said to us : “ Greater works than these that I have done shall ye do,” and we follow Him, inspired by our loyalty and our love for and our trust in such a Leader as the world has never seen save in Him alone.

With a common creed and a common hope and a common purpose and a common Leader we have a common symbol. We express our loyalty to this Leader of ours by taking the sign of His disgrace to be the sign of our glory. The gallows on which He hung is our ornament. It shines from the steeples of our churches ; it flashes in jeweled form from the breasts of our Christian women ; the Cross is our honor. It stands for self-sacrifice, it symbolizes the highest phase of the highest life, for the highest life is love

and the highest phase of love is self-sacrifice for love's sake, and where that symbol leads we mean to follow, where sacrifice summons we mean to go. And we are united in another symbol. Our Leader sat with His twelve at a table and bound them by a great oath in that hour of fellowship to be His followers, and we, too, gather at the table in a sacrament and oath of fellowship and of loyalty to Him. We have a common creed, a common hope, a common purpose, a common Leader, and a common symbol.

We look back upon the past and are encouraged by what has already been accomplished. It is true the church is not what it ought to be, it is true that it has not achieved what it ought to achieve, and yet, tracing its history from beginning to end right through those eighteen centuries, it is on the whole a path of widening and glowing light. Where this Christ has gone, where this Christ has led, where this fellowship has lived, where these men bound to Him and following Him have done their work, there war has been ameliorated (though not yet abolished), there labor has been emancipated from slavery (though not yet adequately rewarded), there commerce has turned from violence and strife to at least honorable competition, there marriage has been transformed from a mere mercantile partnership into a sacred if not absolutely indissoluble bond, there woman has been lifted from the serf to her place of honor and of position, there education has been made common, there the home has been cemented and made sacred, there life has been enriched and enlarged.

As we look about us, and see that martyrdom is not ended and service is not ended and loyalty is not ended, we rejoice and glory in the work which this fellowship is doing to-day. Are there hungry men, it is by this fellowship charity comes. Are there sick, it is by this fellowship the hospitals are built. Are there insane, it is this fel-



lowship which has taught men that insanity is no crime, rather a weakness. It is this fellowship that has taught that even crime is a disease, and that the criminal is to be pitied, while he is punished. In many a distant village, on many a remote prairie, in burning sands, in foreign lands, are men inspired by this hope, bound to us by this creed, animated by this purpose, following this Leader, who are attempting to bring about this kingdom of God on the earth; men who might achieve great results (humanly speaking) by their professions, giving themselves to an unrewarded ministry, which is yet the highest and best of all rewards; men and women in this city of Brooklyn who might take their Sabbath afternoons for rest (and need the rest quite as much as any others), who are giving themselves to an unrewarded service in the Sunday-schools, a service yet rewarded, indeed, by the work itself and the thankful hearts that gather about them.

Last week I went down to Maine to attend the installation of a young man over a little band that belongs to this great world-filling fellowship. One minister, rising before daybreak, plowed his way through four feet of snow for a mile and a half in order that he might reach the train and come to this council. Another walked five miles along the snowy railroad track; another ten. And our party thought that if the man who had charge of the railroad had been as efficient and vigorous as the ministers we should not have been stalled for twenty-nine hours on the way. One of them spoke with such power and force as bore witness that he would have won no mean success at the bar. Another, as justice of the peace, enforcer of law, settler of quarrels and contentions among laboring men in his own little manufacturing parish, had proved that he had abilities which make a man eminent in politics. A third had so organized the little band of fellows that were about him

in Christian work in that small unknown parish has proved himself a man of no mean abilities in executive and administrative functions. And a fourth certainly showed qualities which might have won position if not eminence in music or art or literature. And these were but examples; they are counted by the scores and by the hundreds; men who are laying aside the paths that lead to fame, eminence and wealth that they may serve the good God. I came back proud, prouder than ever, that I am a Christian minister and counted worthy to be fellow with such men as are carrying on humble work in humble parishes, unknown, unsung, before God not unhonored.

Some of you are members of this great Christian fellowship that began with twelve and now numbers millions; this fellowship that in the beginning had not so much as two changes of raiment, but now has the finest and noblest edifices in the world reared to the worship of God and the service of Christ. Ah! my friends, I think it is a splendid thing to be an American—I am proud of that; and in some sense I think it is a greater thing to be an Anglo-Saxon—I am proud to belong to that race which dominates the world, whose branches stand together shoulder to shoulder, hand to hand, promoting intelligence, liberty, culture and civilization. But far grander than to be an American, far grander than to be an Anglo-Saxon, is it to be a Christian. The word was coined in derision, and the men that started out to redeem the world were called in scorn Messianists, Christians. We have taken the word and redeemed it, and to-day to be a follower of that Christ, to-day to belong to those who have abolished slavery, ameliorated war, fed the hungry, turned the thought of men respecting insanity from thinking it a crime to thinking it a form of disease, who have transformed their thought of crime itself—to be a world redeemer, to belong to this

fellowship, is a splendid thing. You and I are not worthy to belong to it. We do not do enough; our ideals are not high enough; our hopes are not radiant enough; our purposes are not strong enough; our life is not noble enough; our service is not good enough. But we belong to it. And if there are any of you here to-day who believe with us that God is good and is in His world making it better, if with us you have hope of a final victory, if with us you love and would be loyal to our Leader, if with us you wish to share in the glory of the Cross that was once a shame, if with us you wish to have some part in the great brotherhood of the common lot, our doors are open and we will welcome you. If not—well, we are sorry for those who might have such a creed, such a hope, such a purpose, such a Leader, such a symbol, and might have such a share in such a glory hereafter, and stand without.

## TO LIVE IS CHRIST.

*"For me to live is Christ, and to die is gain."*

*(Philippians, i. 21.)*

A FRIEND told me the other day that an artist, of whom he asked : If you could get a day off from work what would you do with it? replied : I would go over to my studio and paint a picture. For that man to live was his art. He could think of no recreation, no enjoyment, better than that to which his life was devoted, and in which his life was spent. If I could go about in this congregation and ask one and another of you, What is your life? I wonder what answers I should get. A good many would ask at first : What do you mean? but if I could press the question, if I could carry the inquisition on, if I could make you ask yourselves the question, I think your answers would be something such as these : One mother would say to me : "My life is in my home, in my husband, in my children, in my home-keeping ; I am interested in the question of war or peace ; I am interested in questions of politics and of business, because my sons and my husband are interested in them ; I am interested in receptions of the opera or the theater, or society in its various phases, because my daughters are interested in them. But if they did not care for them I should not. My life is in my home, in my husband, and in my children." And another would say : "My life is in my business. I am fond of my wife, I am fond of my children,



I am glad that I can go home when I must leave my store, and that I do not have to go to a club or a reading-room. But really my life is in my business. There is nothing I enjoy so much as the labor and the excitement of the street or of the counting-room." And another would say: "My life is in public life; I enjoy it. Once in a while I do get tired and like to take a little rest, but I am soon tired of the rest and ready to go back again. I am so used to the glare of the footlights, so used to the blare of the trumpets, that I cannot live without them. My life is in public life." And another would say: "My life is in books. I do business; I have to; I have to get bread and butter for myself and my family; but really if you ask me what my life is, my answer would be that my life is in my books; if I could only have all the books I want, if I could only have all the time I want to study the books, then I should be perfectly happy." And so as I should go about in this congregation, different men and different women would give me different answers to the question: What is your life? The inspiration of one would be in the home, of another would be in business, of another in art, of another in literature, and of another in public excitement.

Now, Paul says: "My life is Christ." The inspiration of my life comes from Christ. The object of my life is Christ. The end of my life is to accomplish Christ's work in the world. Take Christ away, and you take everything away. You may take my friends, and still I shall find something. You may take my earthly possessions, and you will not impoverish me. You may put me into trouble, and I will glory in tribulation. You may take away my theology—or change it—and still I will not despair. But if you were to take Christ away, you would take the keystone out of the arch and the arch would come tumbling to the ground. "For me to live is Christ." It is not even as long as that

in the original. You will see the word *is* is put in by the translator. "For me to live Christ." I want, then, to try to illustrate a little what this means. Life is Christ, Christ is life. Not that I think this is quite true of any of us. Perhaps it is not absolutely true even of Paul. But it was his ideal, and it is in some lesser measure our ideal, and I want to try to set before you what it seems to me this means—to live is Christ.

In the first place, our creed is Christ. Do you ask me what we Christians believe, what we in Plymouth Church believe, what I personally believe, my answer is Christ. What else? Nothing. The whole of my creed is summed up in Christ. What is your philosophy? Well, I have my philosophy, but that is not essential. I have my theory about the Bible, quite a different theory from the one I had twenty years ago. I have my theory of Atonement: it is quite a different one from that I held a quarter century ago. I have my theory of the future state; that is very different from what it was twenty-five years ago. I have my theory of what is the Divine nature, and that has changed a great deal in twenty-five years. My creed is not in my conception of Atonement or of revelation or of the future life; my creed is Christ, and that has not changed, except to grow deeper, stronger and clearer. For me to believe is Christ.

If you want to know what Paul meant by this, turn to his Epistles and run through them. He writes to the Thesalonians about the future, and all he has to say is this: Christ is coming. He has to write to the Corinthians how they are to meet worldliness and corruption, and all he has to say to them is, "Christ crucified"—self-sacrifice. "Manifested"—revealed in Christ. He writes to the Galatians, and what he says to them is: "Stand fast in the liberty where-with Christ has made you free." He writes to the Ephe-

sians and Colossians, to whom the mystical philosophy has come from Alexander, and he says to them : Principalities and powers, and eons—I do not care whether they are or not, Christ controls them ; Christ rules them ; they all belong to Christ. He has to write to the Philippians to acknowledge a missionary box and His message to them is : “My Christ shall supply all your needs.” Whatever He writes, the end of His letter is always the same—Christ. Everything comes from Christ ; centers about Christ ; ends in Christ. So in the Christian church, the creed is Christ. The Presbyterians had a good deal to say in their Westminster Confession of Faith, and the Roman Catholics in their Pius IX. creed, and the Episcopalians in their Thirty-nine Articles, and the Congregationalists in their unwritten creed, but at the heart of all of them is this : Faith in Christ. For to believe is Christ. What do we mean by the Trinity? We mean that all the dim and vague revelations of God in nature and in human history are focused in Christ ; that all the mystic revelations of God in human experience are interpreted in Christ. We believe in the Atonement. What do we mean? That God and man were at one in Christ, and as they were at one in Christ, so when Christ’s work is done in the world they will be at one in humanity. We believe in Regeneration. What do we mean? That no man is really born, no man really becomes a man, no man is really cradled and enters into the beginning of life, until Christ is born in him. We believe in Revelation. What do we mean? We mean that there has been a real revelation, a real unveiling, a real disclosure in the man Christ Jesus. All the articles of our creed, start, call them what you will, Revelation, Regeneration, Atonement, Redemption, future life, all end in Christ. All articles of our faith lead to Christ.

For us to worship is Christ. That which distinguishes Christian worship from Pagan worship is just this: that the Christian worship centers about Christ. There are temples; they sometimes look much alike. There are altars; they sometimes resemble one another. There are forms and services in some Christian churches that are very like other forms and services in Pagan churches. There is a worship of God in the Pagan church as in the Christian church. The difference between the two is this: that all our worship centers in Christ. When we come to church to confess our sins, what most deeply impresses us in the sinfulness is not the harm we have done ourselves, it is not the harm we have done our neighbor, it is the hurt we have inflicted on God as manifested in Jesus Christ His Son. It is no mere figure we say we helped to plait the crown of thorns and helped to thrust the spear into His side. We believe in very truth the long night of Christ's suffering was brought about by the sins of the whole world and we have contributed to them.

Our confession and our repentance are rooted in Christ; our thanksgiving culminates in Him. We come here to sing our praise to our God; and we thank Him for life, for health, for friends and home and children; we thank Him for a free country and an unspotted name; we thank Him for education; but more than for these, more than for any one of them, more than for all of them combined, we thank Him for this: That He has come into the world in the person of His Son; that He has revealed Himself to us; that He has made clear His nature; that He has made it possible for us to come to Him; that He is at one with us and we are at one with Him in Christ.

Is it right to sing praises to Christ; to pray to Christ; to confess to Christ; to worship Christ? I will answer as I once heard Mr. Beecher answer: "I am not afraid to



offer on earth the worship which the angels and the saints offer in Heaven."

"And I beheld, and I heard the voice of many angels round about the throne, and the beasts, and the elders; and the number of them was ten thousand times ten thousand, and thousands of thousands; saying with a loud voice: Worthy is the Lamb that was slain to receive power, and riches, and wisdom, and strength, and honor, and glory, and blessing. And every creature which is in Heaven and on the earth, and under the earth, and such as are in the sea, and all that are in them, heard I saying; Blessing, and honor, and glory, and power, be unto Him that sitteth upon the throne, and unto the Lamb, for ever and ever."

I am not afraid to stand in the outer circle and lift up my voice with their voices. I am not afraid to say "Blessing, and honor, and glory, and power, be unto the Lamb that was slain." I am not afraid to offer all the reverence I have (I wish it were more), all the love my heart can contain (I wish it were greater), all the life I have (I wish it were a richer one) to the Christ who died upon the cross. He is the object and the center of our worship.

The other day I heard a minister say something like this: We worship God the Father, we have access to Him through Jesus Christ the Son, we are inspired to worship by the Holy Spirit. Let those get help from such distinctions who can; they are no help to me. I do not think of the Father as sitting on the throne, and the Prince as waiting in the ante-room to take me to the Father, and the Holy Spirit, the messenger from the Prince, coming to tell me to enter and make the acquaintance of the Prince. There is but one God, and that one God is revealed in Jesus Christ our Lord, and all that I have to offer to the Eternal and the Infinite, and the otherwise unknown Father, I offer—would God it were more—to Christ.

To believe is Christ, to worship is Christ, to live the ordinary, practical, commonplace daily life is Christ. Education is Christ. Education cannot be made Christian by having morning prayers in the school or a catechism in the afternoon. It is not to be made Christian by having a little fringe of religion sewed on the edge of the garment to be ripped off as soon as one gets out of school. Education is Christ, because the whole end and object of education is to develop character, and the consummate character is Christ. We study theoretic science in order that we may understand the world which Christ has made, and practical science that we may know how to use the tools which Christ has put into our hands; and history, that we may understand the growth of the kingdom which Christ has come to bring about in the world; and literature, that we may comprehend the deepest emotions and the highest and divinest life of men, the life brooded by Christ, "the light that lighteth every man that cometh into the world." All education is for Christ in the heart and thought of him who says that to live is Christ.

All industry is Christ. The manufacturer and the farmer are creators, and could not do their work did not Christ's sunshine and Christ's rain fall and Christ work with them. The merchant is a distributor. He could not distribute had not Christ made open the avenue through which the distribution should be carried on. The lawyer is administering justice. He could not administer justice if Christ did not brood a sentiment of justice in the hearts of men that is stronger than self-interest or pride or passion or any other human power. Politics is Christ. In the heart and thought of him who believes that to live is Christ, politics is Christ, and all questions have, in their last analysis, their relation to the kingdom which Christ came to bring upon the earth. Not how shall we build up the Republican

party, not how shall we build up the Democratic party or the Prohibition party or the Populist party, not even, not chiefly, how shall we build up our own country, but this : how shall we so vote and speak and act and write as to bring on in the world and in the whole world, first of all in our own country, our own state, our own city—for religion, like charity, begins at home—but eventually in the whole round globe—the kingdom of righteousness and justice and peace and love and mercy, the kingdom that Christ has come from Heaven to inaugurate on the earth. Shall we have peace—shall we have war? We must go with that question as Christian men to Christ. I know it will seem to some of you as though I were talking cant. I cannot help it if falsity has taken sacred words and made them false by using them in falsehood ; I will not throw the coin away. Shall we have war—shall we have peace? I answer, we must go to Christ and ask the question. What do we owe to an oppressed people? What opportunity have we to give them succor? Let us enter on this war for revenge for the injury done to two hundred and fifty Americans, it will be an unrighteous war. Let us enter on this war to grasp a territory that belongs to another power, and add to our own, it will be an unrighteous war. Let us enter upon this war for the glory that comes from ourselves stronger than the fourth-rate power of Spain, it will be an unrighteous war. But if we are forced and driven into it in order that we may set a people free for their own Christian development, then, and then only, may it be a Christian war. At all events, all politics, all dignity, all education,—all life, has its birth in Christ, its brooding in Christ, its culmination in Christ. To live is Christ.

And so, this Palm Sunday morning that celebrates the time when Christ came in prophetic procession, declaring that in some future time, how far away no one knows, He

will come again to the world, not with weeping, but only with gladness and rejoicing, I ask you to swell His procession, not by song only, not by creed only, not by prayer only, but by living Christ. Christ does not ask the lawyer to leave his office, or the merchant his shop, or the carpenter his bench, or the politician his senate chamber, or the soldier his ranks, any more than he asks the preacher to leave his pulpit. He summons you, not to preach, not to talk, not to sing, save as these are the expressions of life ; He summons you to live Christ. Then, having, indeed, lived Christ, and drawn near that door the curtain of which is black on this side and golden with glory on the other, you will say to die is gain—because to die is still to live, and live a Christly life more simply, more easily, more royally, more divinely ; nay, a life from which the unChristly elements will have been taken from your heart.

Help us to believe in Thee ; to love Thee ; to follow Thee ; to live Thee ; so, when death shall come, to die in Thee. For Thine own namesake, O Christ ! Amen.



## THE NEW VERSUS THE OLD THEOLOGY.

“ \* \* \* *that God may be all in all.*”

(*I. Corinthians, xv. 28.*)

IN these words Paul sums up the end of creation and redemption. At last, when God's work is all done, this will be the consummation—God will be seen to be all and in all.

We are all conscious that the church is passing through a theological change. Some of us are glad of it; some of us are sorry. To some of us it appears to be a change away from religion; to others a change toward a deeper spirit of religion. To me the latter appears to be the truth. This church's kindly recognition of the fact that I have now been ten years your pastor has itself led me to review those ten years a little, and more the years that preceded. I can say for myself, that in the now nearly forty years during which I have been in the Christian ministry, my theological conceptions have undergone a very radical change, and one, I think, common to a great many people. I propose this morning, as far as I can within the reasonable limits of a discourse, to interpret the change which has taken place during the last thirty or forty years in the history of the church by an interpretation of the change which has taken place in my own thought and my own feeling. Whether I shall be interpreting rightly the thought and feeling of others, I cannot tell; I shall try to interpret my own with candor.

If I look back to the time when I first entered the minis-

try, my conception of theology appears now to have been something like this: That there was a good God at the center of the universe; that He dwelt there as upon a great white throne, surrounded by His angels, who were His messengers; that from time to time He made worlds, and that once in some remote time He made this world—how long He was doing it I neither knew nor did I much care; that He made the world as an engineer makes an engine, and regulated it as an engineer regulates an engine, who, having set the forces at work which are to move it, rules those forces by his hand upon the lever; that as He had made the world of nature, so He made the world of men, and ruled them as a king rules his subjects, issuing his laws and requiring obedience to those laws under penalty (for penalty is necessary to law—without it law is mere counsel or advice); that men had violated this law and had deserved the penalty, and yet God was merciful; He had, therefore, sent His Son into the world to bear the penalty, and God thus was freed, as it were, to set aside the law, or at least set aside the penalty, and let men go free. Something like this was my theological conception.

My experience was akin to this conception. I thought of God as one who had made the world; I thought of God as one who, from time to time, had interfered with the world to regulate it; I thought of God who could now, in answer to special prayer, interfere with special providences to render special favors; I thought of God as one who, if I abandoned my sin, would let me off from the penalty of my sin, who, if I began to live a righteous life, would forget and obliterate the past. My prayers were for special things I wanted; my hope was for final deliverance, beyond the grave, from the penalties which I had justly incurred this side of the grave. Something like that, as I now look back upon it through the mist of years, was my thought

and my experience ; and something like that, I am sure, was the thought and experience of many, and is the thought and experience of many to-day. It is a mistake to think that the change which has come over the thoughts of some of us is a minor and unimportant change, and it is a still greater mistake for us who stand on the vantage ground of what we think a higher experience and a better conception to attack the faith which we believe we have outgrown. I respect it ; I respect the men who hold it ; but I myself hold it no longer.

I used to think that the radical difference in theology was between those who believed in the supernatural and those who disbelieved in it ; for so long as I thought of God as sitting apart from nature, if I disbelieve in the supernatural I either disbelieve in God, or else I believed Him to be an absentee God, who had nothing to do with nature. If I thought He had made an engine and put it in motion and did not stand near with His hand on the lever, regulating the engine, then to me the world was a runaway locomotive ; I did not know what would become of it. But I think no longer of God as apart from nature or apart from life ; He is Himself the indwelling force and activity. There are no forces ; there is only one force—God. There are no laws : there is only one law—the will of God. There are no vital energies ; there is only one Infinite and Eternal Energy from which all things proceed. There is no Great First Cause, father of a great variety of little and secondary causes ; because there is one great underlying cause, a *causa causans* of everything in life. Therefore, I no longer recognize a radical distinction between the natural and the supernatural. All the natural is most supernatural, and all the supernatural most natural ; for God is not apart from nature, ruling it, but in nature Himself—the vital force, the only power.

So I have come to think of creation, not as something which God did once, in six days or six thousand years or six myriads of years, but as a continuous process, and God Himself in the process. All days are creative days; all energies are creative energies. Every spring is a new creation. Every year, every hour He divides the waters under the firmament from the waters above the firmament, and lifts the waters from the ocean and causes them to float in clouds above. Every spring He bids the earth bring forth its wealth and flower and blossom. Not a flower that bloomed in Eden was more truly new-created by the fiat of Jehovah than those flowers that stand here on the pulpit to-day. He is in all the processes of nature. If your soul leaves your body, your body crumbles to the dust and mixes in the common earth. If you could conceive the spirit of Almighty God withdrawing from all the natural operations of the universe, the universe would crumble to the dust and cease to be. No bird would longer sing; no flowers again would bloom; no fishes would swim in the sea; no ocean tides would sweep into the harbors or the bays; no sun would put forth its rays; no living man would beat with pulse of hope, or fear, or love. God is the spirit of the universe; imagine that spirit gone, and the universe would be dust and ashes.

So, as I think of God universally, continually, day by day, hour by hour, creating, so I think of Him not ruling over the creation which He has made, but ruling in it, as my spirit rules in my body; omnipresent in the universe, as my spirit is omnipresent in my body. Men sometimes tell me this is pantheism; but it is not pantheism. The difference between saying God is the all and saying that God is in all is surely clear enough for every one to comprehend.

I no longer, therefore, believe in special providences, or,



rather, I believe that all providences are special providences. There is no difference between the general providence and the special providence, except this, that the special providence is a general providence specially perceived. There are some providences which men see more readily than others, but God is the universal provider. Therefore, it is that Christ says: Not a sparrow falls to the ground but your Heavenly Father knoweth it. When the earthquake rives the earth and scores and hundreds and thousands are struck down into death, when the great tornado sweeps out of the howling west and carries myriads to destruction, then we think the Almighty is abroad on the earth; but "not a sparrow falls to the ground but your Heavenly Father knoweth it." Day by day we are to ask for our daily bread—for this is His provision—as well as the large things. The children in the household hardly know that it is father who has provided bread and meat and milk for their daily breakfast, but when at Christmas he brings home a box of luscious candy, they gather around and say: Father has brought us something. We are, after all, but children of an older growth, and forget that all the guidance and all the counsel and all the ministry is God's, and only think that now and then He counsels, and now and then He guides, and now and then He feeds, but all providences are special, all providences general.

So I no longer look back for the evidence that God was in history—though I believe that He was in history—but I look about me to see Him in history now. Not that He was in history in Palestine, and not in Europe; not that He was in the history of Israel, and not in that of Greece or Rome or medieval Europe—always in history. Not more truly guiding Moses in the fifty years of his statesmanship than guiding that other great statesman who has

just passed from honor on earth to glory in heaven—Gladstone—in his three score years of statesmanship ; not more truly the emancipator of the Hebrew race when He led them through the Red Sea than the emancipator of our own negro race when He led them through the red sea of blood in our time. The difference between the Bible and other histories is not that God was in one age and not in another age, but that there were men who could see Him then, and men seem to be blind now. If this old record had told the story of a battle between the ships (had they had ships) of Israel and of a Pagan nation, and in that battle every ship of the Pagans was sunk and not a man of Israel was killed, not a skeptic on the globe but would have pointed the finger of scorn at the story and laughed at the men who had faith in it ; but to-day we read without a question that story of an American victory.

What is a miracle? Do I not believe in miracles? I believe they are going on all the time ! What I object to is the narrowness which shuts miracles up between the covers of a Bible and puts them over into one principal epoch and one special time. What is a miracle? Not the manifestation of an extraordinary power—but an extraordinary manifestation of an ordinary power. The extraordinary manifestations of the ordinary power are going on all the time. Somebody will tell you to-morrow that this is new theology and heretical. This particular part is as old as Augustine and as sound, for it is Augustine who says that a birth is a greater miracle than a resurrection, because it is more astounding that what never was should begin to be than that which was once should seem to cease and yet continue. Why, says Renan, is not resurrection repeated? It is. Every death is a resurrection. Why is it not seen? Ah, if we could see the resurrections as clearly as we see the births, they would cease to be miracles. What makes a

miracle a miracle is that it is an unusual manifestation of an ordinary power. The world is full of the witnesses of God's presence, and we do not see them.

So I am coming to think of revelation, or, rather, I have come to think of revelation—as a progressive and ever continuous process—God showing Himself to man. I like, sometimes, when I am preaching such a sermon as this, to show you that other men are more radical than I am, so I read from the pages of Clark's "Outlines of Christian Theology," whose author is a professor of theology at Colgate University, this definition :

"Revelation was by necessity progressive, as all educational processes must be. Men had first to be taught almost as children, who must have training adapted to their state. God brought in a higher truth as rapidly as man could learn to act upon it; in fact He was always in advance of man, and chargeable rather with haste than with needless delay."

This is what we are coming to believe of revelation : God is disclosing Himself to men only so fast as they are able to receive the disclosure; the disclosure, therefore, is clearer in the New Testament than in the Old; clearer in the Prophets than in the Law; clearer in some books of the Bible than in other books of the Bible.

But some one says : Why not a new revelation? Why not a revelation to-day? As well ask why not a new Columbus to discover a new continent? Because all the continents have been discovered. So the Bible contains such a record of the disclosure of God in human experience; that no continent of truth is left undiscovered. Herbert Spencer says there is an Infinite and Eternal Energy, from which all things proceed, and Matthew Arnold says there is a Power not ourselves that makes for righteousness. We

turn to the Bible for the answer to our question : What is this Energy? What is the nature of this Power? This is what the prophets tell us, with various degrees of clearness, with successive and progressive declaration : First, God is love. Second, love as manifested in the life of Christ service. Third, service unto the bounds of self-sacrifice. Fourth, self-sacrifice disclosed by laying down one's life that another who is unworthy of it may enter into life. That is the kind of energy from which all things proceed ; that is the kind of power that makes for righteousness. Love—love that serves, love that sacrifices itself, love that so sacrifices itself that it lays down life in order that the recipient of it may enter into life. Now what is there more to say? What is there conceivable beyond this? The continent is there ; the continual revelation is in the discovery of what this continent contains and what these truths mean. And that is continual. There are men and women in this congregation who can look back and remember the time when they said, with tripping tongue : “God is love,” and scarce knew what it meant ; but now after the years of experience, of comfort in sorrow, of counsel in perplexity, of deliverance in temptation, of recovery from sin—now they can scarce repeat the words “God is love” without the tears coming to their eyes, for love means more and God means more, and there has been in them a revealing and unveiling, a discovery of God.

I think of God no longer as apart from men, ruling over them, but dwelling in men and ruling them from within. I care less for laws and more for influence, think of law less as a divine statute and more as a divine love. Law seems to me less an edict which God has issued, and more the very nature of God Himself flowing out into all the race of men, as the sunshine flows from the sun. What father would be content to rule his children by law and penalty?



In the olden time the teacher ruled them by rod. What teacher would be content to do that to-day? The teacher to-day lives in the hearts of her pupils, and holds them by influences from within, not by force from without. The pastor lives in the heart of his people and holds them by influences from within, not by penances attached to wrongdoing from without. God rules the human race by influences from within, not by edict and rod from without. God is in humanity as God is in nature. If you ask me what I mean by that, I answer: In humanity as the husband is in the wife and the wife in the husband; as the child is in the father and the father in the child; as the pastor is in the heart of his people and the people are in the heart of the pastor. As man is in his fellow-man, so or only so can I understand it—is God in men, and the laws are His own being working out beneficent results.

So forgiveness is no more the remission of penalty, it is the taking away of sin. "Behold the Lamb of God that taketh away the sin of the world." I think I used to read it thus: "Behold the Lamb of God that takes away some sins from some men." No longer do I think of forgiveness as beginning at Bethlehem. God has been always in human history; lifting off sin from men, cleansing men, purifying men, redeeming men, emancipating men, setting men free; and Christ is the condition of salvation, because Christ is God come into humanity, and there is no deliverance from sin and there is no life except as God comes into the hearts of men.

And so I no longer regard incarnation as an episode standing by itself. From the earliest ages God has been coming into men; He has been dwelling in men; He has been brooding divine experience in men; He has been teaching them love and faith and hope, and they have imparted their faith and their love and their hope to others.

And so, little by little, through fragmentary representations, God has been making Himself known, in all ages and in all races, but most of all in the Hebrew race, and most of all in the prophets of the Hebrew race ; but by various voices—imperfect voices ; by various lives—imperfect lives. At last the fulness of time came ; He came into the one incomparable life ; He filled it as He had filled other lives ; but this life He filled full to overflowing ; in this life there was no subtraction ; in this glass there was no blur ; in this portrait there was no lineament lacking, no lineament inadequately drawn. God was in Christ redeeming the world unto Himself ; and He was in Christ that He might be in Christ's followers ; that He might come into me ; that He might come into you ; that He might inspire us with the strength with which He inspired Jesus ; that He might lead us to live the life that Jesus lived ; that He might give us a like courage ; that He might cleanse us that we should be clean like Him ; that He might draw us with the like hope ; that He might make us one of the great band of brothers of whom Christ was first-born ; that He might inspire us to offer that prayer which we have read this morning ; that we might ourselves be filled with all the fulness of God.

So I no longer look forward to a great day of resurrection. A seed is planted in the ground ; when does the resurrection of the seed take place ? It breaks its shell ; it pushes itself up through the dark loam ; it steers its way strangely toward the light, though it is not in the light ; at last it breaks through the earth, and the two little leaves appear above the surface of the ground—when did the resurrection take place ? Did it take place when the integument broke ? Did it take place when the first shoot began to push itself to the light or the first root began to push itself down into the earth ? At what point did it take place

in the upward journey? Or did it not take place until the earth was left behind and it emerged into the sunlight? We are all in process of resurrection. Just in the measure that we have within us what the apostle calls "the power of an endless life," just in that measure we are beginning to break the integument and push our way toward the sun. All science tells us that death is not an instantaneous process. The moment a man is born he begins to die; the physical body begins to decay, and new physical elements take the place of the old ones, and that process goes on day after day and year after year. Death goes on from the cradle to the grave; and resurrection goes along with it; the growing spirit becoming more and more immortal, more and more unable to keep within the flesh, more and more piercing the integument, until at last it breaks the shell and casts away and takes its wings and flies heavenward. If we are caterpillars, we are caterpillars with wings, and they are growing.

So as I look back along the years, I can see that my theology and my experience have changed. All the natural seems to me now most supernatural; creation a continuous process; special providence in every act of life; history as full of the presence of God now as it ever was; revelation, the discovery of God, still carried on as it was carried on in the ages past; law, God's own nature pushing itself out and working itself through the natures of His children; forgiveness, the continual process of cleansing and setting free from sin; incarnation, the entrance through the open door of Christ into humanity, carried on and on, not to be completed until the whole human race is one with God; prayer, not a seeking that God shall do what I want, but a seeking that I may do what God wants, the conformity of my nature to God's nature; faith, not a belief that other men have seen God and testified to Him truly, but a per-

ception myself of God in human life and in human experience ; and religion, not a something apart from life to be found in churches and taken at last as a kind of torch through the dark door of death, but the life of God in the soul of man.



## THE USE AND ABUSE OF GOD'S GIFTS.

*"In the world ye shall have tribulation, but be of good cheer; I have overcome the world"*

(*John, xvi. 33.*)

THIS text is the climax of what I wish to say to you this morning concerning the relation which the Christian as a child of God bears to the world in which he lives. I do not expect to cover the whole ground of that relationship, of course; but only to point out some of the thoughts which the Bible contains and some of the principles which it illustrates.

By the world we mean two things, which are in essence, perhaps, akin. We mean, in the first place, the material world which is our dwelling-place—the things, the material things by which we are surrounded; and we mean, in the second place, the world of men—human society, but this world of men in its temporal and sensuous aspect, the world of men as it lives in the world of matter; not animal man only, but social man, the temporal man, the man of to-day. This word "world" is of German origin, and is composed of two words, meaning "man"—"age." To live in the world is to live in the generation of man to which you belong, and thus this term world comes to have the double signification—the cosmos or ordered material world, and society or humankind in its present earthly aspects.

Now, what is our relation to this world of men and this

world of matter? When I say our relation, I mean what is the relation of those of us who profess to be followers and disciples of Jesus Christ. How should we look at this world of matter and this world of men? How should we live in it? What are our relations to it? What is to be our point of view respecting it?

In the first place, this world of matter is God's world. He made it; and He made the whole of it. "In the beginning he created the heavens and the earth." The sea is His, and He made it; the dry land, His hands fashioned it; the cattle on a thousand hills are His; the wild beasts, the Psalmist tells us are His; the world is His and the fulness thereof. The Persians thought that there were two gods—a good god who made the good things in the world and a bad god who made the bad things in the world. Something of that notion has drifted down into our time, and I think there are persons who almost regard the world as a kind of double creation—part of it God-made and part of it Devil-made; part of it for good and part of it for evil. But this is not the Hebrew point of view. This is not the New Testament point of view. The world is God's; the whole world is God's; He made it; He made the whole of it, and there is not one single solitary thing in the world that has not its legitimate and proper place in a well-ordered and beneficent creation. God made life and God made death. God made health and God made sickness. It is in this belief that the prophet speaks when he makes Jehovah say: "I, God, create good and evil." The whole world is God's world. There is no part of it we are to shut off and say that does not belong to Him, that came from some other quarter.

As the whole world is God's world, it is our world because He made it, primarily and chiefly, as man's dwelling-place. In the very time when He made it He gave the

whole of it into man's hands and said : I have made this your home and your dwelling-place, take it all ; take all its forces, all its juices, all its natural products, all its living creatures, have dominion over it, subdue it, control it, it is yours. And what God said in creation is repeated again and again in the New Testament. "He giveth us all things richly to enjoy," says Paul. "All things are yours, whether Paul, or Apollos, or Cephas, or life, or death, or things present, or things to come—all are yours, and ye are Christ's, and Christ is God's." The whole world is ours, because the whole world is our Father's : The whole of life is ours, because the whole of life belongs to our Father.

The Greeks abounded in life. They were rich in all the resources of life. They took the whole of life, and they enjoyed it ; its appetites, its passions, its pleasures, its beauty, its love, its vigor—it was all theirs ; and medieval Christianity, or at least a section of the medieval church, said this won't do. These pleasures are leading men into licentiousness and drunkenness and into all manner of excesses ; these beauties are stimulating the evil passions of men, and are working harm ; this literature is immoral and working out immorality. We must cut off the art, we must cut off the literature, we must cut off the drama, because, these being dangerous, they are disastrous. The Greek believed that all food belonged to man, and gave himself up, oftentimes, to weeks of feasting, and so the church cut the food off altogether and put fasting over against the pagan feasting. The Greek gave himself up to the care of the body. Nothing was too much to develop the fineness of physical condition, the most splendid athletic condition, the most beautiful female form ; and the church said : You are spending altogether too much time on the body, on that which passes away, therefore we won't spend any time in

this way. The Greeks indulged in luxurious baths, and so the saints took no baths. The Greeks gave themselves to the adornment of the person, and there was one saint of the medieval age, I believe, who for twenty-five years did not comb her hair; it was part of her piety. Because the Greeks had thrown themselves into life with abandon, therefore the early Christians drew themselves out of life altogether, finding in place by their disregard of the body, by their exercise of fasting, by the abolishment of art, except as it has a distinctly religious and spiritual end in view, seeking the diminution of life.

Now that is not the Christ spirit. It is not the New Testament spirit. It is not the Hebraic spirit. On the contrary, the message of the Bible to you and to me is this: God made the world and the whole of it; and He made it for you, and gives you all things richly to enjoy; all life is yours, all material things are yours; the whole world, all activity, belong to you, and you are to take them and to use them. Let me illustrate: It is said, and with truth, that alcohol has produced an incalculable amount of poverty and crime and wretchedness in the world; and I suppose there are not a few people who really think, though they would not quite dare to say so, and certainly would not say so in the church, that God made a mistake in allowing alcohol to be in the world at all; it never ought to have come here; certainly that, they think, was made by the devil and not by God. Now, over against that, my affirmation is that alcohol is one of God's gifts to man. It is part of His creation; He made it, put it here, and what we have to do is to find out what its right use is. Is it a food, is it a beverage, then we are to use it in that way. Is it no food and no beverage, but simply a medicine, then we are to banish it to the drug store. Is it neither food nor medicine, ought it never to be brought in homes, but only



to be used in the arts and sciences, then we are to abolish it from both drug store and home. I am not going to discuss here which of these things we ought to do, but I do assert that the first thing to do respecting any material thing is to find out, scientifically, what is its use. The fact that it has been misused, and the attendant fact that the misuse has brought incalculable harm and injury into the world, is not a reason to believe that God did not make it; it is a reason for the wisest, the most skilful, the most energetic, the most open-minded among us to begin the study of the problem what is its divine use. For there is nothing in the world that has not somewhere, in arts, in sciences, in medicine, in food, a proper place in human life.

Or, let me apply it to an activity. The first and most instinctive appreciation of any element in music is the time element. People who do not care for harmony, people who do not care for melody enjoy the time element, and when the rhythm of the music is sharply-marked they instinctively keep time to it, sometimes with the head, sometimes with the hands, and occasionally with the feet. Now, that is the way in which marching and dancing have grown up. It is the most natural thing in the world for a little child to dance to music. Crossing on the ocean steamer last summer there was a little child three years old who sat at our table. We were on the North German Lloyd line, where there is music every day at dinner, and when a Strauss waltz was struck up the little child cared more for the music than for her dinner, and jumped down out of her mother's lap to the floor and swayed to and fro, keeping time with her head and with her body and with her feet to music. Keeping time to music is native to man. God made him to do it; it belongs to him. Now what are we to do? Why, I say we are to use that quality in man. It is a part of human nature, and there is no part of human nature that

is intrinsically bad ; there is no part that may not be mis-used, and there is no part that may not be rightly used. If we put all dancing together and call it the dance and condemn it, putting our prohibition against the innocent dance of children on the lawn, then those who want to dance may put all dancing together and call it the dance and give their approbation to every form of dance. Indiscriminate condemnation inevitably produces indiscriminate approval. The one is the child of the other. The Christian is to learn how to discriminate between the right and the wrong use of faculties as between the right and the wrong use of material things. No Christian has a right to put the body above the soul. Christians have no right to go to dances that keep them up at such hours and in such atmospheres and under such conditions that the next day they are unfit for the service of humanity, the fulfilment of their right work in the world, the accomplishment of God's praise and glory. But the duty of the Christian is not to put all dancing in one room and turn the key on it. It is to learn how to take this natural and instinctive element of music and use it for God's glory. For all things are to praise God. Not only the church but all material things and all activities. "Praise the Lord from the earth, ye dragons ;" do not slay the dragons ; St. George was mistaken. Make the dragons praise God—"and all deeps, fire and hail"—the fire that consumes our houses, the hail that breaks in our windows ; "fruitful trees"—yes, of course, they will ; "and all trees"—those that do not bear fruits, also ; "beasts and all cattle, creeping things, flying fowl, kings of the earth"—royal in their palaces—"and all people"—peasants in their poverty ; "young men and maidens, old men and children." "Let everything that hath breath praise the Lord."

In the third place, this world which God has made, and

which He has given to His children, we are to use as not abusing it.

“But this I say, brethren. The time is short. It remaineth that both they that have wives be as though they had none; and they that weep, as though they wept not; and they that rejoice, as though they rejoiced not; and they that buy, as though they possessed not; and they that use this world, as not abusing it. For the fashion of this world passeth away.”

You are to use the world in the recognition of the fact, all the time, that the fashion of the world passeth away. This is what Christ says: “The body is more than raiment, the life is more than meat.” The inward, that to which life is to serve, is more than the outward, that which serves the life. We are in the world; but if we are disciples of Christ we believe that we are passing through this world to another; that this world is the educator and the preparer, and that we are here for the development of a higher and more splendid nature and a higher and more splendid life.

Now, when we take the temporal and the transient and make them fail to minister to the spiritual, we are abusing the world; and when we take the temporal and the transient and make them minister to the spiritual and the eternal we are using the world. There are two common abuses in our time, which are after all very much the same, though the outward manifestation is different. The one is care, and the other is luxury. There is a familiar proverb that runs something like this: It is not worth while to kill yourself to keep yourself. It is a very homely text, but it is a very useful one. There are men who are killing themselves to keep themselves, and there are a great many women who are killing themselves to keep themselves. You have no right to do it. What doth it profit a man, or a woman

either, to gain the whole world and sacrifice life in the process? If it is wearing out your life to keep house on your present scale, change the scale. You have no right to wear out your life for the sake of your own luxury, that you would agree; but you have no right to wear out your life for the sake of your children's luxury, or your husband's luxury, either. There are women who are destroying themselves to maintain spotlessness, or to maintain order, or to maintain show and appearance and semblance equal to their neighbor's; women who are housekeepers, and not home-keepers; women who are breaking themselves down—aye, and though they know it not, breaking their children down and their husbands down by the very sacrifice of the soul to the material thing. And there are men who are doing the same; men who can buy any number of pictures and cannot enjoy one; men who could buy great libraries but never want to read a book unless it is a ledger or a daybook; men who can purchase all luxuries, but have brought on dyspepsia by the way they have done their work, so that they cannot eat what is on their table. New York City and Brooklyn are full of men who have undermined their lives in the endeavor to get things.

That is the one abuse of the world—to put thing above life; and the other abuse is luxury. What is luxury? What is comfort for one person is luxury to another. What was luxury yesterday is comfort to-day. What is luxury? Anything is legitimate comfort which ministers to the higher life; and anything is illegitimate luxury which enervates and degrades the higher life. You cannot draw a clear line. You cannot say diamonds are a luxury and flowers are not. You cannot say beauty in art, color in a picture is legitimate and beauty of color in a dress is not. I remember reading some years ago an article in an English review on the question whether women ought to have dia-



monds, which argued at great length that it was wrong, and I remembered, as I read it, a little story told by Henry Ward Beecher: "One day when I was at work in the garden cultivating flowers a very serious-minded deacon passed that way and looked over the fence. 'Henry, I am sorry to see you wasting your time over flowers.'" And says Henry: "I should like to have asked him what God made flowers for, but I did not quite dare." He grew braver afterwards. If precious stones are not legitimate objects of beauty why did God make them? Are they the tares the devil has sown? When a woman wears a diamond or a pearl or a precious stone of any kind because it has beauty, that is legitimate, if she has money enough; and, on the other hand, when she wears it to outshine her neighbor, that is illegitimate. Taste in dress is right; and fashion in dress—well, that is mainly wrong. Dressmaking ought to be an art, and not merely an imitation. To wear the same kind of a bonnet that somebody else wears, when it is in good taste for somebody else and hideous for you, is unchristian as well as bad taste. The fundamental principle in life is this: Everything must minister to the higher life.

I am glad we are growing rich; I am glad we are getting large wealth and wealthy men; I am glad we are having finer houses and finer furniture and finer clothing; but who can fail to see that the larger houses and the finer clothing and the greater wealth are bringing in temptation. And this is the temptation: to care for things, not life. All things that will minister to the life of the community are legitimate; and all those things which enervate and degrade and deteriorate life and eat it out are illegitimate, whether they eat it out by the griping and poisonous bite of care, or whether they eat it out by the luxurious and the entrancing and the death-sleep producing embrace of luxury.

Care is a serpent that has fangs—it poisons; and luxury is the anaconda that winds himself around you in soft embrace and crushes you to death.

The whole world is God's, and the whole world is ours, and the whole world is ours to use as not abusing it. Because—now I come to my climax—we are to do what Christ did; we are to overcome the world. Not surrender to it, not compromise with it, not surrender to a part of it, not withdraw from a part of it and give it up as a hopeless task. We are to overcome the world, and the whole world. There is nothing in the world that Christ did not come to redeem. Nothing, nothing. You cannot draw a line and say that all on this side is religious and all on that side secular. There is no such line. The Christian church was cruel, it was licentious. It pampered men at the top with wealth, it burdened a great many men at the bottom with poverty. It had begging friars on the one hand, and the rich on the other. It was a corrupt church, a cruel church, a worldly church and a selfish church, and Christ had to redeem it; he still has to redeem it. He had to redeem literature. The Greek literature pandered to vice, it did promote iniquity; some of it I wish were not studied in our colleges to-day. Christ had to redeem art. Art was made to minister to sensuality. He is still redeeming art. The church, on the whole, to-day is ministering to the higher life. Literature, on the whole, is ministering to the higher life. Art is; music is. Everything is to minister to it when he is through with the work of redemption. There are some newspapers which make me feel it a pretty difficult task to redeem the press. But so long as the press counts itself simply a mercantile venture, so long as it is conducted on the principle of giving men what they want, so long as it abandons its high vocation, which is to be a leader of men and a creator of life, and only panders

to the passions of evil men, so long as it shows enterprise without discrimination and gathers in its grouping all manner of news, good and bad, noble and worldly, and throws it out in one great waste-basket before you every morning in the week, so long as it is doing this work—what shall we do? Take no newspapers? Shall we look askance on all reporters and pressmen, hoping they will treat us well in their papers though we never treat them well in our parlors? No, we are to redeem the press by not bringing into our homes—we have virtue enough for that now, I believe—nor buying in the horse-cars the paper we should be ashamed to have our wife see us reading in our home; we are to discriminate, take the clean paper, leave the unclean paper alone; treat the reporter as a gentleman who treats you as a gentleman, and bow the other reporter out as quickly as we can.

What are we to do with the drama? Abolish it? I used to think so. I used to say you cannot redeem the theater. I confess now, when I look at the posters, I am very doubtful about it at times. But still I am sure we cannot close the theater. I know we cannot do that. What shall we do with this mimic art? I have wondered sometimes what we ministers would be if we had been treated as the world, until very recently, has treated actors. If we were assumed to be licentious, vicious, profane, unworthy of decent companionship; if we were ostracized; if we were treated as the English law at one time treated them, pronouncing them vagabonds, I wonder whether we should not become licentious and ignorant and vagabonds.

We are to conquer the world, and the whole world. I know this is a dangerous sermon to preach. But truth is always dangerous, and the only thing that is safe is platitudes. I know there are young people who will go away from this church—at least I am afraid they will—and say

that I have given them color and endorsement to plunge into the dance and into drinking and into all festivities, because I have said the whole world is theirs. I say the whole world is God's, and it is yours if you are a child of God and are using it in God's service and in no other way. If the theater sends you back to life tired, uninterested in your work, unfitted for it, you have no right to go to the theater; and if, on the contrary, the theater rests your brain, relieves you from the stress and strain of care, and you go back after an evening of pleasure passed at the theater refreshed and invigorated to take hold of your work with a new vigor and a new enterprise, then you have a right to go. You are to determine every question by this one fundamental test: Does it make you more worthy to be a child of God and do God's work in the world? You are to measure the Sabbath, you are to measure the church, you are to measure recreation, you are to measure the dance, you are to measure cards, you are to measure everything by this one test: Does it help me to live a better, nobler, larger, wiser, manlier life? If it does, it is yours; if it does not, it is not yours, and that it belongs to somebody else does not make it yours.

"I have overcome the world," said Christ. He lived in it. John the Baptist came neither eating nor drinking. Christ himself came eating and drinking, and men said, A wine bibber and a glutton. They lied, and they knew they lied, and the world knew they lied. The world knew it then, and has known it ever since. He went into social life, but he went so pure, so high, with such self-abnegation and such grace that the lie never adhered to him. Men have charged him with fanaticism, with being impracticable. But never from that day to this has the charge of being self-indulgent and self-seeking adhered to him. Go with his spirit. Then you may go anywhere.



Men think or say that there are some things worldly men may do, but Christians must not and we reverse it : we say that a Christian may do things that a man not a Christian cannot do. And the better Christian he is the more safe it is for him to do it. If he is full of the spirit of consecration, if he loves God with all his heart and soul, if he is pure in all the atoms of his blood, he may see what other men cannot see, he can go with safety where men of less courage and less steadfast cannot go. Freedom belongs to the children of God.

When war was threatened in this country there were three parties. There was one that said we must compromise with the South, we must accede to its commands, we must do what it asks us ; and there was another party that said, No, we cannot do that, we will separate, let the erring sisters go in peace ; but the great North rose up, saying we will not compromise and we will not let the erring sisters go in peace, and we will not rest until this flag of ours floats over every rood of territory and over every ward and all men are loyal to the flag. It was a great undertaking, but we did it ; and loyalty to Jesus Christ does not mean less than loyalty to the flag.

You have no right to compromise and do what the world does because the world does it ; this is not being a Christian. You are to live by Christian principles, and you have no right to abandon some part of the world, and say, That belongs to the world, that belongs to the devil, I leave it alone. You cannot let your erring sister go in peace. She won't let you go in peace. No, no. The function of the Christian church is to take the world and the whole world and all material things and all activities and consecrate them to the service of God, and thus make them serve God because they serve humanity. Then as you live you will from time to time have to say, "In the world I

have tribulation," you will be scoffed at, you will have obloquy, you will be sneered at for your Puritan principles, no doubt, but when you look back you will be able to say triumphantly, "I have overcome the world."

## JOY IS IN SERVICE.

*"Come, for all things are now ready,"*  
(*Luke, xiv. 20.*)

CHRIST had been invited into the house of a Pharisee, who had made a feast for him, and as they sat at meat one of the guests, a pious man, said, "Blessed are they that shall eat bread in the kingdom of God." Christ was accustomed to take advantage of social occasions to utter spiritual truth, and this man, conventional in his character, was perhaps inspired by this example of Christ Himself to utter a spiritual truth; and this is what he said: "Blessed are they that shall eat bread in the kingdom of God."

No doubt he thought that he believed this, but Christ said to him in effect, You are mistaken in thinking that you believe it. Men do not think it will be blessed to eat bread in the kingdom of God; for the kingdom of God is as one making a feast, and he sends out to the guests, and says to them, "Come, all things are now ready." And, instead of wanting to come in and eat bread in this kingdom of God, they all begin to make excuse. One says, I have houses, I must go to look at them; and another, I have bought a yoke of oxen, I must go to prove them; and another, I have married a wife, and therefore I cannot come. You think that you think you want to enter heaven, but you are mistaken. You do not really want to get to heaven, because when heaven is open to you you do not

enter in ; you make a reason for not entering in. You are mistaken, says Christ, in thinking that heaven is something future ; you are mistaken in thinking that you must die in order to get there. It is here ; the invitation has come to you ; Come, everything is ready. But, after all, you do not want to come, you wait and stand outside.

You will observe that in this parable Christ says nothing about the excuses which men do in point of fact make. No man really says, openly and publicly, I cannot be a Christian because I have some houses, I cannot be a Christian because I am too poor, I cannot be a Christian because I have a wife and family. One man says, I cannot be a Christian because I do not believe in the Trinity ; another man, I cannot be a Christian because I am not good enough ; another man, I cannot be a Christian because the church is not good enough. These are the excuses which men actually make for not coming into the kingdom of God. And Christ does not pay any attention to them. He does not really think they are worth answering, so He sweeps them all aside as false excuses, and comes at the heart of the real reason which keeps men from the kingdom of God—property, business, society.

Come, everything is ready. But then, if you come, and if you have some property, you must bring the property with you. You cannot come into the kingdom of God and leave the property outside. And if you come and bring your property with you, you come bringing yourself and your property under the laws of the kingdom of God ; and the law of the kingdom of God is that acquisition is a means, never an end. Property is an instrument to be used in God's service, not something to be used and spent by yourself. Do you want to come ? Do you want to take all that you have and all that you are and lay them on God's altar ? Do you want to say, that property which I



have is not something I have in order to make more property, not something I have in order to give more entertainments, it is something I have to use for God's service and the service of my fellow-men? If you do want to say this there is nothing to prevent your coming. This is the way we must imagine that will be done in heaven. We cannot conceive of a covetous or pleasure-seeking man in the kingdom of heaven. There men will not see how much they can get, but how much they can give and how far what they have will go in rendering service. "Let this mind be in you which was also in Christ Jesus, who, being in the form of God, thought equality with God not a prize to be reached after." That is heaven. To have that kind of spirit, that what you have does not count as a possession, and what somebody else has that is greater does not count as something you are seeking, but what you have and what you can get counts as something whereby you can serve others. Do you really want this spirit? I wonder how many in this congregation really do in their heart of hearts want the kind of spirit which would lead them to say, All that I have belongs to God. What is mine is mine; that is the American motto; what is mine is God's, that is the motto of the kingdom of God. If as you came to church this morning somebody had come to you and said, I know an investment that will certainly pay you ten per cent. if you put a thousand dollars into it, you might not put the thousand dollars there, but you would be much obliged to your friend and would say so. If another man should come and say, I know where you can give a thousand dollars, and it will do a great deal of good, I do not think you would be so much obliged to him, do you? But that is the kingdom of God. It is the chance to do good with money. That is heaven.

There was once a rich young man who came to Christ;

he came running—he was eager; he kneeled down—he was reverent; he appealed to Christ as “Good Master”—he was honoring the Christ. After Christ had told him to keep the commandments, he asked, “What lack I yet?” and Christ looked on him and said, “Go sell that which you have, give to the poor; take your acquisitions and use them for the service of men.” And he went away sorrowful. He thought he wanted the kingdom of God, but he did not. He did not really want to come into that state of life in which all that he had should be used in the service of men and for the glory of God. There are young men in this congregation who think they want to go to heaven. They are mistaken; they do not. Heaven means a place in which activity is service; and they have come here to New York to engage in activity for self-service. They are full of ambition; they want to accomplish great things for themselves and for their family; they want to succeed, and dollar marks are the measure of success. But Christ comes to them and says, “You are mistaken, joy is not in success, joy is not in mere achievement, joy is in service.” The object of business is to serve man; that is the only thing worth living for; so to live as to leave the world richer, happier, better, wiser and nobler for having lived in it; the way is open to you, come. You think you want to go to heaven. Heaven is here. You have not to wait to die, the door is open. It is service. Christ took upon Himself the form of a servant. That is the kingdom of heaven. But you do not want that. When He said to some fishermen, Follow me! they left their nets and places and followed Christ, they had come into heaven, because they wanted the best service, and they saw a chance for them to do a better service in preaching than in fishing. That is not true of everybody. The pulpit would be better if some men left preaching and went to fishing, and it would not be

so well if all the fishermen went into the pulpit; but the fundamental truth is this: to go not where you can get most money, not where you can get most good, but to take life as a service, to be in the form of the servant as Christ was, is heaven. Do you want it?

And another man said, I have married a wife, and therefore I cannot come. A quaint old writer asks why he did not come and bring his wife with him, and this is not a mere verbal quip, it is a keen, sharp way of putting a profound truth. If some persons are kept out of the kingdom of heaven by their property and others by their business, a great many are kept out of the kingdom of heaven by society. What is society for? What is the object of it? Why, society is a place in which we interchange life—at least it ought to be; a place where I give you my thoughts and you give me your thoughts; I give you my experience, you give me your experience; I give you something of my life, you give me something of your life. In many ways it is better than our formal service here, where I am trying to give life, and you give to me only through your eyes and attention. Society is a market-place in which life is interchanged. What a splendid opportunity that gives for doing Christ's work in the world, for carrying Christ's spirit, faith and hope and love and giving it to those who have not faith and hope and love. But do you want that kind of society? Is that what you go into society for? Do you and I go into it in order that we may give what God has given to us; not always by preaching, not always by talking what people call religion, not by formal utterances, but by carrying the life in our hearts and letting the life shine out simply, naturally and of itself? This very parable illustrates this truth:

"Then said he also to him that bade him, When thou makest a dinner or a supper, call not thy friends, nor thy

brethren, neither thy kinsmen, nor thy rich neighbors; lest they also bid thee again, and a recompense be made thee."

As though that were something to be dreaded. Do not give a party to people who could invite you, because you might then be invited to a party. Do not give a reception to people who could ask you, because you might be invited by them to a reception again.

"But when thou makest a feast, call the poor, the maimed, the lame, the blind; and thou shalt be blessed: for they cannot recompense thee: for thou shalt be recompensed at the resurrection of the just."

Neither this nor anything else which Christ said is to be taken literally, and the spirit taken out of it by simply accepting the letter. But the spirit is this: Society is, like business and property, for service. Now, do you want to come into the kingdom of God? Do you want to bring your receptions, your companionships, your friendships—do you want to bring all these things and make them the media by which you shall carry life out to others, receiving something from their life again, and all together coming nearer to God's love? If so, do it; that is all. You cannot ask a better opportunity. You have the chance. The very next reception you go to, go from your knees, and carry Christ with you. Ah, do you want heaven? Is that the society you and I really do want? Paul says, "Our citizenship is in heaven." Christ says, "The kingdom of heaven is at hand." The kingdom of heaven is among you. It is here and now.

Paul tells us what the kingdom of heaven means; let us read his definition: "The kingdom of God is not meat and drink, but righteousness and peace and joy in the Holy Spirit"—or, "in holiness of spirit." Righteousness, peace, joy in holiness of spirit; have you to die to get to heaven? I should like to know where you could expect to find in all



the future a better chance to stand for righteousness, or a better place in which to stand for righteousness, or a time in which men were more needed to stand for righteousness, than in this very city of New York, at this very time, after this last election. And yet how many citizens are there who want to do it? How many Christians are there who really want to put on the armor and go out and stand for righteousness and truth and honor against all corruption and all fraud and all dishonor and all attempts to loot government for personal pelf? That is heaven. Do you want heaven? Well, begin. You never will have a better opportunity.

For peace and peacemaking, where will you find a greater possibility? How can you expect in the celestial sphere a better opportunity for seeking peace, pursuing peace, maintaining the things which make for peace, than in this warring, jostling, contending society of ours in America? To-day there are some men looking forward in hope for war; they want it; they will be glad if this country can be forced into war; they believe in the glory of it; they have a hope to make something out of the requirements of it, or they think it will bring larger business. For one reason or other they want war. And then again there are other persons who do not quite dare to say, I would like war, but they would really be glad if conscience would say to them, You must go to war. They really would like to have the country driven into war by the force of a great moral sentiment. And then there are some who are desiring peace and longing for peace and praying for peace, and who would only be forced into war by the law of the inexorable, by the necessity of an honor that is greater than the demand for peace. I wonder where the majority is; because the kingdom of God is peace, and the peacemaker belongs to the kingdom of God, and the man who, going every-

where carries with him the spirit of peace, is in the kingdom of God.

It is joy in holiness of spirit. Is that the joy we want? We want pleasures of the body, food, raiment, luxury, and our struggle with one another is to see who shall get the larger houses and the finer raiment and the more splendid equipment. We want pleasures of the body and we want happiness of the heart; we want wife and children and earthly affections; we appreciate these; but the joy which comes from holiness of the spirit, how covetous are we of that? Do you remember how, in almost his last hour, just as He was facing the cross, Christ turned to His disciples and said, "My joy I give to you." That is joy of the spirit. The joy of the soldier who bares his bosom to the bullet. The joy of the nurse who gives herself with patient endurance to the service of the hospital. The joy of the physician who carries on his shoulders the burdens of a hundred families bowed by sickness; the joy of suffering for others. The joy of the mother—greatest joy that ever the world knows—sweetest song of joy that is ever sung from out this weeping world. And yet is this the joy that we are most covetous of, most eager to get? that you are most covetous of, that you are most eager to have? Come, all things are ready. If you want the kingdom of God buckle on your armor and fight for it. If you want the kingdom of heaven that means peace, and joy and holiness of spirit, go where you can carry the pacific spirit and self-sacrificing love.

Or turn to Christ's definition of heaven :

"In such an hour as ye think not the Son of man cometh. Who, then, is a faithful and wise servant, whom his lord hath made ruler over his household, to give them meat in due season? Blessed is that servant, whom his lord when he cometh shall find so doing. Verily, I say unto you, That he shall make him ruler over all his goods."

When the lord returns, who is it that comes into heaven? The man who has been faithful in distributing to others. Why? Because he has been faithful over a few things, he can be entrusted to be a ruler over larger things. And in the next chapter he makes this clearer. He draws the sharp line. He puts the sheep on one side and the goats on the other, and says, "Come, ye blessed of my Father, into the kingdom prepared for you." Who are these? Why, those who saw men in sickness and visited them, in hunger and fed them, in nakedness and clothed them. This was the kingdom of heaven on earth. This will be kingdom of heaven in heaven; a better chance, a larger service. You have been faithful over a few things, I will make you ruler over many things. What is a ruler? A man who has an opportunity, a splendid opportunity, to bear the burdens of a great nation and render a great service through the opportunity which is conferred upon him. Now, have you to die for that? Are there no sick whom you can visit? Are there no hungry whom you can feed? Are there none in prison whom you can go to? Are there no suffering whom you can comfort? Is there no opportunity here in America for doing this service that belongs to the kingdom of heaven and is the kingdom of heaven? Must you die to find the poor and suffering and sick and needy? Those who will go from this house, this afternoon, to minister to the poor, to the sick, to the needy, in our Sunday-schools and hospitals, have just begun the kind of joyous work that will belong to them in heaven. I wonder what will become of the man who, after he has done it for four or five years, says, I have served my turn, I want to stop! The kingdom of heaven is love and joy and peace and service. It is here. Come, all things are ready, if you want it, *if you want it.*

Consider who will come into this kingdom.

"And they all with one consent began to make excuse. The first said unto him, I have bought a piece of ground, and I must needs go and see it; I pray thee, have me excused. And another said, I have bought five yoke of oxen, and I go to prove them; I pray thee have me excused. And another said, I have married a wife, and therefore I cannot come. So that servant came, and shewed his lord these things. Then the master of the house being angry, said to his servant, Go out quickly into the streets and lanes of the city, and bring in hither the poor, and the maimed, and the halt, and the blind. And the servant said, Lord, it is done as thou hast commanded, and yet there is room. And the lord said unto the servant, Go out into the highways and hedges, and compel them to come in, that my house may be filled."

The halt, the lame, the blind, those who are not yet come into the kingdom and know that they are not yet come into it; these are the ones. Those who feel the need and know the need in themselves, they are the ones who are pressing into the kingdom. If you want this put still more specifically and with more vigor, turn to another parable:

"A certain man had two sons; and he came to the first, and said, Son, go to work to-day in my vineyard. He answered and said, I will not; but afterward he repented, and went. And he came to the second, and said likewise. And he answered and said, I go, sir: and went not. Whether of them twain did the will of his father? They say unto him, The first. Jesus saith unto them, Verily, I say unto you, That the publicans and the harlots go into the kingdom of God before you."

Those are the maimed and the halt and the blind. A publican who beats upon his breast and says, God be merciful unto me, a sinner, goes before the member of the orthodox church who says, I thank God I am not as other men are. The harlot who comes weeping at Christ's feet and bathes his feet with her tears and kisses them and wipes



away the tears with the tresses of her head goes into the kingdom of God before the Pharisee who has made the feast for Christ.

Is this the society that you and I want? Sinners who have repented? Publicans and harlots who are coming in because God loves those who need love, and not those who are worthy of His love? Is this the kind of society we want? Well, we can have it. You have not to die to find it. There is one institution here in Brooklyn which gathers under its roof the women whom we call "Lost" women. Lost, because we shut them out of our doors and debar them from our sympathies. There are a few women in Brooklyn struggling hard to carry on that charity. Not many; it is hard work, because there are not a great many, after all, who want the society of harlots who have repented of their sin and want to seek a better life.

Our citizenship is in heaven. The kingdom of heaven is among you. We have not to die to get there. It is love; you can love now. It is righteousness; you can arm yourself for righteousness now. It is peace; you can carry the spirit of peace with you now. It is hope; you can look forward with hope to that which is not seen now. It is service; you can give yourself to service now. The painters pictured Christ with a halo around His head. It was but a poor mechanical contrivance to interpret the sublime reality. He did not come from heaven to earth, He brought heaven with Him to the earth, He walked in heaven, and heaven environed Him, and He lived in the midst of heaven while He was yet upon the earth, and in service and in sacrifice for love's sake He found His heaven, and was the Son of God because He was the Son of infinite, unfailing, ever-patient service. And he says to you and to me, Follow me; the kingdom of heaven is at hand; come, for all things are ready.

Do you like this feast? Sit down at it; but do not say, Blessed are they that shall eat bread in the kingdom of God, and then stay out and away from the table that is spread here, because you care for property or business or society more than you do for the life of God among the children of men.

## AN EASTER MESSAGE.

*"\* \* \* Jesus Christ, who hath abolished death, and hath brought life and immortality to light through the gospel."*

*(II Timothy, i., 10.)*

HE brought them to light ; then they existed before. He did not create the life nor the immortality except as bringing to light that which was before, in some true sense creates it. As the writing with invisible ink upon a parchment is made by the heat to appear when it is brought to the fire, so the life and immortality written in the aspirations and the desires of humanity Christ made to appear. As a seed has in itself the secret and germ of a future life, and yet that life lies undiscovered until planted in the ground and surrounded by right conditions, the seed bursts into its integuments and pushes forth the life into the sunlight, so in humanity there was dormant life and immortality, and Christ was the sun ; Christ, the rain ; Christ, the soil, which made this life and immortality burst forth.

Life existed, but men did not know it, they did not understand themselves. It exists to-day, but men do not know it, they do not understand themselves. In the measure in which the Easter message is apprehended and understood, this life and immortality which is in men is brought to light. The life brings the immortality to light, and the faith in immortality nourishes the life. For life and immortality are not merely future terms. Man has in him-

self an immortal life ; has in himself something which is incorruptible and divine. Christianity is a revelation of what man is, not merely of what man shall be.

If you consider carefully the teachings of Christ in the Four Gospels, you will observe that He says very little directly about immortality. He does not argue. There is nothing akin to the *Phaedo* of Socrates in the Four Gospels. Christ takes the immortal life in men for granted and appeals to it, and by His appeal He Himself evokes it. He brings it out of them by assuming that it is in them, by addressing Himself to that in them which other teachers had failed to see. He speaks the language of faith, the language of one who knows the invisible world, and men begin to open their eyes and look about them and see that there is an invisible world. As a mother says to her child, still sleeping and apparently just opening its eyes : "Listen and you can hear the singing of the birds," and the child, awakening, hears the singing of the birds outside, so Christ said to men, just awakening from their sleep : "Hark !" and men listened and heard the voices which they might have heard before had they but hearkened before. He spoke with an abounding hope, which appealed to the sleeping hope in men, and the sleeping hope in men responded, and they who before never had hoped, began to hope to escape bondage, to be delivered from themselves, to receive something they knew not what, but better than anything they had ever known. He spoke with love. Reformers and preachers had supposed that men would respond to fear or to authority ; prophets had spoken of law, thundering ; prophets had spoken with threats, frightening : Christ spoke of mercy and of love, and, lo ! where one man would respond to fear, a hundred sprang up answering to love. Love was in their hearts, and they knew it not ; and other



men knew it not; but when He spoke the language of love their hearts answered. More men have responded, a thousand-fold, I suppose, to the Parable of the Prodigal Son, which is but the word of love, than ever responded to threat of penalty. For this was characteristic of Christ, that He saw in men the faith and the hope and the love, as the sun sees the life in the seed, as the skilled chemist sees the writing, invisible, on the parchment, and then made men themselves see what was dormant within them. He brought the life and the immortality in man to light. In this was the secret of His power; in this was the secret of the power of the early church. He went everywhere, and His apostles went everywhere, saying to men, You are children of God. He did not argue this, He asserted it. When ye pray, he said, say Our Father. That was enough, and their hearts responded, and they began to say Our Father. Men and women who had been without hope, who had been without love, without faith, or at least without this consciousness of faith and hope and love, began to flock about Him, because by His words, His presence, His life, He evoked in them the faith, the hope the love which was dormant but unrecognized. And they wondered and rejoiced in the resurrection taking place with them. When He died and His apostles went forth, their message was, primarily, a message of the resurrection; not merely that this man had died and come forth from the grave again, but that He had Himself possessed an incorruptible life, and that all men possessed in themselves an incorruptible life. The message was carried forward into Greece and Rome, to slaves, to freedmen, to men in bondage, to men who had counted themselves but as dumb, driven cattle, to men who had counted themselves but as machines—to them there came the word, You are men, you are children of God, you have in yourselves an im-

mortal, eternal life, you are worthier than you thought you were. The first growth of the Christian church was less a conversion than a resurrection, less a conscious turning away from sin than a waking from unconscious death into conscious life.

In the Republic Plato put the mechanics among the serfs and slaves; but here was one who came to be the Redeemer of the world, King of Kings and Lord of Lords, and He was a carpenter. It is impossible for us to conceive the shock of glad surprise that entered into common hearts when this message came to men. The world's Redeemer, the King of Kings, the Lord of Lords, the Son of God, He who sits upon the throne, He before whom the angels and the archangels veil their faces, He has been not only a man, but He has been such a man as you are—a carpenter, a mechanic, belonging to the lower classes of society; and in His coming, by His very presence, by His personality, by the very attitude He assumed, by the very life He led, more even than by the words He spoke, He bears testimony that you are God's sons; rise up into the life that belongs to you and take it. So the first four centuries of the Christian era were centuries of resurrection. They were a rising of the dead into life. This is the first Easter message. You and I are sons of God. You Christian men, who have long walked in Christian ways, who have long followed Christ, you are sons of God. You who have just begun, you are sons of God. You who are questioning whether you will begin or not, you are sons of God. You who have never thought of joining the church, you who have never thought of being Christians, you who are satisfied to live your present life and be a mere machine for gathering gold or silver or printed paper money, you who measure a man by the amount of money he makes and not by the use he is able to put it to, even you are sons of

God. You proud people, you self-satisfied people, you young men who think that there is nothing in life but success, and nothing in success but dollar marks, you are sons of God. There is not a man here so discouraged, so disheartened ; not a man so self-conceited—and he is worst of all—who is not a son of God. There is something better in life for you than is bounded by the present horizon. There is something better for you than simply to delve and dig. You are immortal ; you are a child of God. You have in you a faith though you do not know it ; eyes though you have never opened them ; the possibilities of a hope if you could only arouse it ; a sleeping and splendid life—oh, that you would but let the Christ this Easter morn awaken it !

He has brought to us this message that we are children of God, and, therefore, life is better than we thought it was. He has brought to us the message that our neighbors are children of God, and, therefore, they are more worth working for than we thought they were. He has given a new meaning to despotism, for the evil of despotism is not that it crushes the joy out of life ; it is this, that it crushes life itself out of men and makes them no longer able to live the life they ought to live. And he has given a new meaning to liberty, for there is no man so degraded, so down-pressed, so belittled by long centuries of degradation but that there is for him a life and an immortality which can be brought to light.

Judaism was democratic. There was no caste ; no aristocracy ; the people stood in their constitution upon one common level. But they did not know why ; they did not understand the reason of their own free institutions. Jesus Christ poured the light of His life on humanity, and showed that all men had in them some divine life, and, therefore, that the difference between them are simply differences

in stages of development. You are great deal better than the besotted negro? yes, you are to-day; a great deal wiser than the Indian? yes, to-day; a great deal more intelligent than the superstitious? yes, to-day! Just as the tree that has grown ten feet high is a great deal more than the tree that has two leaves above the surface of the ground—to-day. But the fundamental message of Christianity is this: that there is a real quality in men because a real life in all, and now men are worth working for and worth fighting for. There is no man in all this world who is not worth working for, since Christ has worked for all; no man in all this world who is not worth dying for, since Christ has died for all. No longer can we draw a line and put on one side men like the negro slaves, and say, they are not worth it, and on the other side an Anglo-Saxon race and say, they are worth it. All men are men; all men are God's children. To live, to suffer, to serve, to die for the feeblest, the poorest, the most ignorant, the most unworthy, is to die, to live, to suffer, to serve one who has in himself the undeveloped germs of infinite worth.

As Christ has given a new inspiration so He has given a new method to philanthropy and to liberty. Rome did not look with indifference upon physical suffering. Men were hungry, and great largesses of corn were poured out for them. Men were unhappy, and great shows and entertainments were provided for them. Roman philanthropy confined itself to making people comfortable or happy, or perchance merry, here and now. But Christ has shown a better way. His Easter message is something different from this. It is no longer merely, feed the hungry, but so quicken the life of this hungry one that he shall be able to feed himself. It is no longer, emancipate this race, but put such life and power into men that they



shall emancipate themselves. It is a message of self-help ; if you will compare the pages of human history you will find that helping men to help themselves has been practically confined to Christendom.

A great army has gone out from Great Britain and from the United States into India ; an army of men, a still greater army of women. They have gone there without guns or swords. They have gone with the gospel of Jesus Christ ; and they have gone in this faith ; that there is in the Hindu race a hope, though they are not hopeful ; a capacity for progress, though there is no progress evident ; a power of love, though there is but little development of love ; that there are in these far away peoples the same elements of character, the same sonship with God that there is in the highest and the most developed. They have gone in this faith ; that there is a power in the gospel to awaken that life ; that as there was a resurrection in the East in the first four centuries, as there was a resurrection in Europe in the Reformation, as there was a resurrection in England under Wesley's teaching, as there has been a beginning of resurrection in our own slave states under our own great army of teachers and missionaries, so in all this world there is nowhere a people but has the possibility of resurrection in them ; in them a possible Christlikeness ; in them a possible development of thrift ; a possible intelligence ; a possible faith and hope and love ; so that the same message which has awakened life in us shall be able to awaken life in them. Faith in immortality is not merely a belief that the man who dies and whose body is dropped in the grave will by and by rise again ; it is that in every man there is the power of an endless life ; and in the measure in which that faith in the power of an endless life in humanity has been wrought into the consciousness of the church, just in that measure has come a new

conception of humanity—a new conception that it is worth while to work for men. And there has come a new conception that the method of doing this work is not merely by feeding the hungry and clothing the naked, but by inspiring life. Let the message go out that two hundred thousand reconcentrados in Cuba are suffering hunger, and the whole country will arouse itself to feed them. Let the message go out that two hundred thousand negroes in our own Nation are ignorant and unkempt, undeveloped and uneducated, and ask the churches for a collection to send them teachers and missionaries, and it will be a few dollars sent with a laggard and reluctant hand. Why? Because, after all, we do not more than half believe in resurrection; because we have sympathies that respond to cold and to hunger, but are not yet ourselves immortal enough to respond to the appeal that calls for the development of manhood itself into divine conditions.

This faith in immortality and in life, has given too, a new basis for hope and a new inspiration to hope in all work for men. For if all our work is confined within the narrow cycle of this time, how trifling is what we can do, and how little the result appears to be. But if what we do here is but beginning, and there is a future where this work will have its chance to fructify, there is another and a better ground for hopefulness. Put a ship load of young men with a few elders on an Atlantic vessel, and let them sail for ten or fifteen or twenty days, with the assurance that at the end of twenty days the ship will founder, and they know it—what inspiration is there for these wiser men to teach the younger men! Put these younger men on a training ship with the wiser men in charge of them, and say to them, When the training has been done, these younger men will go out into life where they will render service and the training ship becomes a school. This

world is not an Atlantic steamer that is going to the bottom, carrying all on board, it is a training school; and whatever you do for your fellow men, whatever you do, by your example and your influence to help your neighbor, you are doing for the midshipmen that are going into service when death comes. At least this is our Easter faith.

We do not think our labor lost because death suddenly carries off the one we were laboring with and laboring for. Our Easter message has brought us a new conception of life, a new conception of pain and suffering as a part of the development of life, and, of course, a new conception of death itself. While men are with us and we can see their spiritual activity we can believe, and for the most part we do believe that they are more than machines, more than animals. But when the last breath is drawn, the last sign is given, the lips are closed, and there is no response and no manifestation of spirit, then it requires a higher faith to believe in immortality. Up to that time belief in the immortal life of the living man has been helped by manifestations of the life; now that manifestations have ceased no wonder that men think the life has ceased also. And yet if you will know what Easter has done in bringing life and immortality to light compare—I will not go to Pagan literature—what the Hebrew Psalmist says, before the resurrection of Christ, with what the Christian Psalmist says after the resurrection of Christ. I read for this contrast from the two selections embodied in the Episcopal prayer-book service for the dead:

“Thou turnest man to destruction: again thou sayest, Come again, ye children of men. For a thousand years in thy sight are but as yesterday: seeing that is past as a watch in the night. As soon as thou scatterest them they are even as asleep: and fade away suddenly like the grass.

In the morning it is green, and groweth up ; but in the evening it is cut down, dried up, and withered. For we consume away in thy displeasure ; and are afraid at thy wrathful indignation. Thou hast set our misdeeds before thee : and our secret sins in the light of thy countenance. For when thou art angry all our days are gone ; we bring our years to an end, as it were a tale that is told. The days of our age are threescore years and ten ; and though men be so strong that they come to fourscore years : yet is their strength then but labor and sorrow ; so soon passeth it away, and we are gone."

That is the Hebrew psalm of life and death ; contrast with it the Christian psalm of life and death :

"Now this I say, brethren, that flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God ; neither doth corruption inherit incorruption. Behold, I show you a mystery : We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed, in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trump : for the trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed. For this corruptible must put on incorruption, and this mortal must put on immortality. So when this corruptible shall have put on incorruption, and this mortal shall have put on immortality, then shall be brought to pass the saying that is written, Death is swallowed up in victory. O death, where is thy sting ? O grave, where is thy victory ? The sting of death is sin ; and the strength of sin is the law. But thanks be to God, which giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ."

Even the devout and godly Jew, standing at the grave, could only say, "Our days are passed, like a tale that is told." When Christ had brought life and immortality to light, the better instructed apostle cries, standing at the grave, "Thanks be to God which giveth us the victory." O you whose loved ones have gone from you, they have risen ! Stand with Paul, not with Moses. If you read the



90th psalm from your prayer-book at all, read it only to learn on what darkness Christ hath shed the light of His life.

In the Gallery of American Artists in New York is a picture of "Night and Waning Day," the strong figure of Night holding in his arms the fainting figure of Waning Day, and looking into the face to see the life depart from it, and ready to put the extinguisher on Day's torch. I want some artist who shall paint for us "Waning Night and Rising Day," who shall show—I am no artist and cannot paint the picture even in words—who shall show Day taking off the mourning garments of the Night robed in black, with only a few stars in the heavens to show in the midst of grief that the sun is still there, and putting on the world's bridal garments, luminous, radiant, woven with flowers; for Paganism thinks that day ends in night and sleep is eternal, and Christianity believes that night ends in day and life is eternal.

## A GODLESS LIFE IS A HOPELESS LIFE.

*“ \* \* \* having no hope, and without God in the world.”*

*Ephesians, ii., 12.*

GODLESS and hopeless go together in Paul's mind. To be godless is to be hopeless. There is in our time, though perhaps not peculiar to our time, both a school of philosophy and a tendency of thought, to the effect that the world can get along without God and without religion. Not without morality, but without religion; not without righteousness, but without God.

Whether we are growing more or less religious is a question often asked, and not easily answered. If we accept the prophet's definition of religion, "What doth the Lord require of thee but to do justly, to love mercy and to walk humbly with thy God," then I think we may say that the tendency in our time on the whole is toward more justice and toward more mercy, but it is not so clear that it is toward a more humble walking with God. There is a larger sense of what is due by man to his fellow-man than there was, certainly, in the Middle Ages, and there is a greater tendency to pitifulness for the weak, the suffering, the erring, and the sinful than there was in the Middle Ages. But is there more devotion, more worshipfulness, more faith in an unseen God and an eternal future, or are we growing more temporal, more earthy, more inclined to banish the eternal world and think only of the present?

That there is such a tendency to live only in the present can hardly be doubted. It is seen in the publication of some books the very object of which is to show that there is no use for religion, that religion in the sense of faith in an infinite and unseen God belongs to the earlier conditions of humanity, and that we are outgrowing it. It is seen in some books and many sermons, like the one I am trying to preach this morning, to show that there is a necessity for religion and for faith in God—books that would not be written and sermons that would not be preached if the writer and the preacher did not detect or think he detected a tendency in the other direction. It is seen in the philosophy of agnosticism (the very word came into existence in this century) that we can know nothing about the future and nothing about God, but that we must make all our calculations and live all our lives as though there were no future and no God that we could know about. It is seen in a very considerable tendency among even religious teachers to eliminate what is called the supernatural (what I should prefer to call the superhuman) from religion and consider that Christianity itself is only the highest type of human thought and human endeavor. It is seen in the tendency to question whether prayer is anything more than the expression of a desire or an aspiration, whether there is a real communion between the individual soul and God, whether God is really influenced by human prayer, as a father is influenced by a son's request. It is seen in questioning respecting the value of church services and public worship and the Sabbath Day and the Bible and religious literature.

Whether we are growing more godless or not, I am not sure. If I were to trust the rather pessimistic utterances of our time respecting, for instance, the Sabbath and the church, I should say church attendance is diminishing and

Sabbath observance is decreasing. But when I read ancient literature, I find precisely the same lament in the olden time. I find the old Puritan writers lamenting in almost identical language the decay of church worship and the decay of Sabbath observance; I find this same lament in the earlier days of England, and in the Middle Ages, and I conclude that on the whole the tendency of which I am to speak this morning is not peculiar to the nineteenth century, but has been in the world in all times. Whether it is greater now than in past times I do not care to inquire. I doubt whether any definite answer can be given to the question. But whether that tendency is stronger to-day than it was fifty, a hundred, two hundred years ago or not, of one thing I am personally very sure—that the whole fabric of human society and human life as it now is rests on faith in God and faith in a future life; that there is no hope for well-ordered society or good government or broad and large and profound education or human happiness in any aspect of the case, if God is eliminated from life and the future is eliminated from life. And when I say God, what I mean is, faith that there is in the universe and transcending the universe, that is transcending the whole of all phenomena, a Being who is interpreted to us by our own experience, a Being who thinks and who loves and who acts, a personal Being. What I mean by religion is not a definition or a philosophy or a creed or a moral life, but the personal relation of the individual soul and the personal relation of society to this personal God. And what I say is this: Eliminate this faith from the world, let mankind come to believe either that there is no personal Being or that there is no possible intimate relationship between individuals or society and this personal Being, eliminate this faith in God and in religion from human life and the hope of the world is taken away, the hope for good government,



the hope for ordered society, the hope for generous education, the hope for high moral life.

Imagine, then, for a moment, if you can, this faith gone and all that it has brought gone. You are not to consider what the effect will be on a single man living in a community which believes in God and believes in religion, you are not to think what will be the effect on a community from which this faith has a good deal faded out, but in which it is left dominant and strong in a group of men that gather from time to time in the church to express it to one another and to carry it to others. You are to consider the whole faith in God and religion swept away, the whole American people (I won't go beyond this continent) left without belief in a personal God and in an immortal future. We stand, then (this is the hypothesis), on this planet; our life bounds the horizon of our existence; our planet bounds the horizon of our life; there is nothing beyond. There is no one above; no one superior to the men who are about us; no one to whom we can look, whom we can reverence, on whom we can rely, from whom we can accept strength and help and force; there is no one who issues any law; there is no one who embodies or represents any principle; there is nothing in righteousness higher than the life we see; nothing in life beyond the present. Imagine for one moment this thoroughly wrought into the consciousness of humanity. All the relics of faith in a personal God who transcends the universe, all relics of faith in the possible communion with such a person, all faith in any sense of obligation to him, all sense of any peril from His justice, all sense of any hope from His helpfulness, all sense of any communion with Him gone, and the great mass of fifty or sixty millions of people on this continent without a God and without a future, what would happen?

In the first place, the institution of religion would be gone. The Sabbath would be a holiday. It would not even have the sacredness of Fourth of July or Decoration Day; for Fourth of July and Decoration Day have sacred national memories, they do appeal to something unselfish in man. They appeal to patriotism, they appeal to love of country, they appeal to the kind of patriotism and the kind of love of country that has suffered martyrdom for the nation and for others. But that would not be in Sunday. The Sunday will be simply a holiday, simply a day for a good time. It may still be supported by law. Law may still hedge it about, but it will be hedged about just as ineffectually as the laws which were made limiting the time of labor to eight or nine hours or prohibiting child labor or limiting woman labor. They will be labor laws; nothing else. It is true that there may still be men who will use this day wisely. Probably, they will say we must use this day for intellectual education; we must use it for physical education; we must not waste it—that will hurt us on Monday; we must not waste our money—that will give us less money to spend. But any use of this day for the development of the spiritual nature of man, for the development of reverence or duty or love, or conscience even, in its higher monitions, that they will not seek, because there is no such nature in man, there is no immortal being, there is no faith that perceives the invisible, there is no conscience that recognizes the eternal and unseen principles of right and wrong; man is only a higher animal, his life limited by the cradle at the one side and the grave at the other.

Sunday is taken out, and with the Sunday the Bible is gone. Men will study Hebrew literature as they study Greek literature, but they will see that if the Bible is not something more than Greek literature, it is nothing, for

the message of the Bible is above all things this: That there is a God; that God is justice, and that God is love, and that because He is justice and love, therefore He demands justice and love of his children. Take that out of the Bible, and the Bible is gone. You may take the gods out of Homer, and Homer stands, for the message of the Odyssey is not the relation in which Ulysses stands to Jove; but take Jehovah out of Job, and Job is gone, because the very message of Job is the relationship in which one man stands in the time of his suffering to a just and righteous God. Take that out and the book is ashes. Take the gods out of the orations of Demosthenes, and they still stand eloquent and admirable; but take God out of Isaiah, and the book crumbles to pieces, for the whole message of Isaiah is of a personal God bringing hope to a nation in the time of its poverty and its exile. Take that out, and the book is not worth studying. Take God out of the Bible, and the Bible does not deserve to be studied.

With the Sabbath and the Bible the church and the Sunday-school will be gone. Still, men may gather in their houses on Sunday, but there will be no worship. If there is any music, it will be æsthetic. If there is what people call prayer, it will be aspiration. There will be no coming together to find God; there will be no coming together to worship Him; there is no quickening of one's divine life, there is no God, there is no future, there is no divine life which we are to quicken one in another. The pulpit will be a platform, the sermon will be a lecture, and the prayer will be an aspiration.

The Bible is gone, the church is gone, the Sunday is gone, the great fundamental principles of right and wrong are gone. Not all right, not all wrong; but there is no longer One who personifies righteousness. He is gone. The only conception you can have of right and wrong is

such a conception as you can get from the life of your neighbor, the good neighbor and the bad neighbor, the prosperous neighbor and the unprosperous neighbor. There is no divine life showing itself in creation; there is no divine life showing itself in the scattered fragments of life; for there is no divine life. No longer are you now on the earth as a prisoner in a dungeon, who sees specks of light glinting through the narrow window and knows there is sunshine outside. There are no specks of light, there is no sunshine outside. And as there is no one to personify righteousness, no conception of righteousness except that which you can gather from men around you, so there are no eternal, essential, vital principles of right and wrong. There are empirical rules; that is all. Empirical rules that depend not upon the will of a righteous being, not on the character of a righteous being, not on the existence of eternal righteousness apart from what men have said, rules that have been made by society and can only be enforced by society. There are no penalties of the future, there are no rewards of the future, all of life is bounded by the grave, all law comes from the will of men, and all ethical principles are simply the empirical rules which these men have formed for their own guidance in a comfortable going through this present world. The only measure, therefore, of right and wrong in this state of society from which God has been abolished and religion has been abolished is what will make happiness. To-day there are two standards, what will make happiness and what will make character, and the same thing does not always make happiness and make character—not by any means. But then the notion of living for character will be gone. There will be no character apart from conformity to the external realities which society has framed and which society enforces. Consider for one moment what this world would be to live in if all



the fear of the future and all the hope of the future were taken away, if there were no reverence for any one higher than king or president or prophet or parent.

And with this expunging of great fundamental principles from life, there will go out also from man the capacity to perceive them. Conscience is what? Why it is putting together a moral act and a moral ideal and measuring the act by the ideal. It is putting this moral act which you do alongside the eternal laws of God and seeing how it stands by those laws of God. But there are no longer laws of God, there are no longer eternal laws, there is, so far as we are concerned, nothing eternal. We are shut off in this little world, and the end of our life is for us the end of the world. There are no eternities, there are no eternal laws. Therefore conscience can do nothing but measure your conduct by the result to yourself, or, possibly, the result to your neighbor. Conscience becomes simply a shrewd, skilful guess as to the results of conduct. There is no honesty but the best policy.

You have taken God out of the religious institutions, you have taken God out of the ethical laws. You will take God and eternal sanction out of all systems of education, and what will be the result there? What is the end of education? Go to-day to any college; listen to any baccalaureate sermon, or for that matter, to any commencement address, and the commonplace in all the addresses is this: for men who do believe in God and men who do not believe in God: The end of education is character. Men who believe in religion and men who do not believe in religion are alike so impregnated with a sense of the future that everything in this world is made preparation for something yet to come. The boy is educated for a later boyhood; the school is preparation for the college; the college for the post-graduate course; the post-graduate course for

the professional course, the professional course for the professional life; and the professional life for the further life that lies beyond; all the way through man is looking forward, and whether he will or not he still looks forward to a point beyond the grave; whether he knows it or not he is preparing for something to come, and the end of education, he says, is character. But now this is taken away. There is no forecasting. You are launched on a ship that has no harbor. The end of your voyage is to founder and go down, and, therefore, the end of education is to make the voyage as comfortable and pleasant as you can. Education under the inspiration and guidance of secularism has already become what the Germans call a "bread and butter science." How it makes a man's blood tingle sometimes with indignation to hear the discussion: Is a college education an advantage to a business man? and to hear the question discussed as though the end of education was to make a successful business man. As though the question was: If you go through college, can you make more money? Take God out of life, take immortality out of life, take the character that is founded on God and immortality out of life, and then education does become a mere bread and butter science, then we shall no longer be making men and women in our schools and colleges, we shall be making doctors or lawyers or teachers or plumbers or carpenters—anything but men and women—and the education itself will lose the very center. For what is the object of all education but to find in the constant trace of paths that run not parallel but toward a common center, what that center is. We study biology in order that we may learn how from the beginning God made the world; we study astronomy to find out how the Eternal is carrying on the operations of his hands in other worlds than this; we study history to know what is the trend and course of human

events under the guidance of a Providence who is making something out of the past—we cannot tell what, nor can we tell how; we study literature in order that we may understand the heart that beats behind the page, that we may know what love is and what hope is and what is the eternal life in men that throbs in them all and that makes them as one man. Then we shall study biology and astronomy only to know how the dice was thrown five hundred thousand years ago; and history, not to know what is the trend and course of events, only to know how sailors disported themselves, how they played upon the deck, and how they handled the oars one hundred years ago before their boat went down. The very unifying end, the very object and aim, the very ambition of education is plucked away when you pluck God out of life and religion out of life.

What will become of society? That splendid phrase “the brotherhood of man” has almost become, the common cant of politician and sociologist. Why brotherhood? Why am I your brother? Why is this man with a hundred millions brother to this truckman whom he employs? Why is this college professor with his learning brother to this poor, ignorant man, who can neither read nor write? Why are you in your comfortable home brother or sister of the homeless and the outcast? You are not if you have no common Father. You are not fellow-citizen with a man who does not belong to the same country. You are not fellow Anglo-Saxon with a man who does not belong to the same race. You are not human brother to the man who is not of the same parentage. And you are not one of a brotherhood if there be no Father who binds us together. You might better pluck the sun out of the heavens and expect the moons and the planets to revolve still in their ceaseless round harmonious with one another than to take God out of the universe or out of the faith of men in the

universe and think the faith in brotherhood will abide. It is bad enough as it is, this human society of ours. Even while deep down in our hearts, wrought into our experience by centuries of traditions, is the belief, half held by all, strongly held by many, that we are the children of a common Father, how we fight and wrangle, how we press against one another and crowd one another to the wall, how brother cheats his brother and tramples his brother under foot! Take the thought of God and with it the thought of human brotherhood out of life, and your streets will be like those narrow streets of Cairo that have no sidewalks, where a man drives his carriage as he will, and the pedestrian must get out of the way or be run over. There will be no longer left in society a place whereon men may walk; strong men may trample them under foot. If brotherhood goes away, fatherhood goes. Oh, the pitifulness of it! Oh, the sorrowfulness of it! Life is sad enough at best; as grapes are trodden in the wine vats so are men oppressed and beaten down, yet the Christian believes that out of the flowing of blood and the ferment will issue the richness and the sparkle of the glory of another life. But take away the thought of God and there will be no other life; then there will be no God who sympathizes; then men will trample on their fellow-men, and the blood of the grapes will run off and nothing be left but the skins to curse the earth.

Your Sunday is gone, your church is gone, your Bible is gone, your prayer is gone, your hopes centering on God and immortality have gone, your sanction of the eternal and immortal life is gone, the great ethical principles that stand as standards of human life are gone, the end and aim of education as character building has gone, the bond that held society together, and made it at least tolerable to live upon the earth, has gone. And what will your government be? The supremacy of law. But what is law? Law is



either one of two things. It is either the authority that lies over men, which men must find out, or it is the authority of the strongest over the weakest, which men do find out. Either there are eternal laws which men must obey and which men have, therefore, the power to enforce, or else there are no eternal laws, and might makes right. Whether that might is the might of a democracy or an aristocracy or a monarchy does not make any difference. It is as bad in the one case as it is in the other. I know there has been despotism of conscience. I know that men undertake as interpreters of God's law to enforce their own interpretations on others, by sinful methods sometimes, and harsh ones; still I put the three types before you and let you choose. Under Nero, the will of one man enforced over the community; in the French Revolution, the law of a despotic democracy enforced over the community; in New England the law of despotic conscience enforced over the community. Will any man hesitate whether he will live in Puritan New England under a despotic conscience, or in France under a despotic democracy, or in Rome under a despotic Nero? But take away God and the consciousness of law that is sanctioned and centered in God, and you have nothing left but the despotism either of democracy or an individual. Preach in America until it becomes a national tradition, that there are no future sanctions and no future rewards, no God and no eternal principles of right and wrong; teach this great half-educated, hirsute, greedy, ambitious democracy that there is nothing lying beyond this life and no God above to whom they must respond and nothing they may revere but their fellow men, and you who own a little more than the majority may as well burn the bonds your wealth is written on, for there would be nothing to stand between the despotic power of a democracy without sympathy or conscience and yourself.

Godless is hopeless. If we let our Sundays become mere holidays, if we forget the message of God which our Bible conveys to us, if we think our church is a mere place in which to gather for lectures, if we lose worship out of our aggregate lives and worship out of our individual lives, if we cease to believe that there is a personal God and Father of us all who loves us and seeks our love, if we cease to seek that love and to live in personal relationship with him, if the school of philosophy which would take these faiths out of us has its way, and the tendency of thought which we sometimes see in America runs on to its completion, we shall have a government from which liberty will be gone, we shall have a society from which brotherhood will be gone, we shall have an education from which all the noble ends and unifying purpose will be gone, we shall have individual lives from which all hope and comfort in time of sorrow and trouble will be gone. If that time were to come, then no longer, when you laid your beloved in the grave, could you look for a reunion, no longer, could you hope for a life beyond in which you might correct some of the mistakes, the errors and the follies of which you have been guilty here; no longer, when you struggled with temptations without and fears within that were too strong for you, could you lift clasped hands and seek help from a power not yourself to strengthen and make you rejoice. Godless is hopeless.

## WHAT IS RELIGION ?

*"For now we see through a glass, darkly ; but then face to face : now I know in part ; but then shall I know even as also I am known. And now abideth faith, hope, love, these three ; but the greatest of these is love."*

*(I. Corinthians, xiii. 12, 13.)*

You look at a mirror and seem to see something on the other side ; it is as a window. The apostle says we see things in this life as one that looks through a window at them. But not that only ; we look at a tarnished mirror, and the reflections which come to us are dimmed and imperfect reflections. And not that only ; we only see fragmentary reflections ; we are as a child playing with a dissected map and getting now and then a state pieced together, while yet the United States is in fragments about him. Out of parts we construct our imperfect knowledge, says the apostle. So then our life is tarnished and imperfect. That is not all ; even as things are, with our poor, fragmentary, broken knowledge—even as things are, we have faith and hope and love.

I want to speak to you, then, this morning of the transient and the eternal in religion ; or, of the semblance and the reality in religion ; the difference between the life and our knowledge of the life. We know in part, we prophesy in part, we see through a glass darkly ; but in spite of all that there remains for us life itself, and the life itself is far more important than anything we think about the life.

Religion is a life ; theology is what we think about life. You have heard a great many times before from this pulpit, under its present pastorate and under its previous pastorate, that religion is more important than theology, but it needs to be said over and over again. I wish this morning to illustrate and to apply it rather than to expound it.

Religion is the life of the conscience. We have a capacity of judging that there are some things right and some things wrong, just as we have a capacity of judging that there are some things beautiful and some things ugly, some things wise and some things unwise. Now this capacity to judge that some things are right and some things are wrong, this appreciation of the things that are right and distaste for and abhorrence of the things that are wrong, we call conscience. And religion is loyalty to this conscience, obedience to this conscience ; it is counting this conscience supreme ; it is putting righteousness above beauty, above pleasure, above expediency. There are some persons who say that conscience is the voice of God in the soul of man, and others who say that it is simply a human faculty with all the frailties and imperfections of other human faculties. There are some again who say that righteousness is determined by its results. That is righteous which will produce the greatest happiness to the greatest number and that is unrighteous which will produce unhappiness. There are others who say that righteousness is determined by the command of God. He tells you not to steal ; therefore, it is wrong to steal. And still others say, No, righteousness lies back of God, it is inherent in God Himself ; it is not wrong to steal because God tells you you must not steal, but He tells you you must not steal because it is wrong to steal. And so men divide and discuss what is the basis of ethics and what is the nature of conscience, and think that they are



discussing religion, but they are not. Religion is not an opinion what kind of a thing conscience is; religion is not an opinion as to the basis of moral obligation; religion is obedience to conscience. There are men and women in this very congregation who never have considered the question whether conscience is a supernatural voice of God in the soul of man or a natural faculty; there are men and women in this very congregation who have never considered the problem what is the basis of ethics, whether it is the greatest good of the greatest number or the command of God or whether right and wrong are absolute and eternal principles, and one cannot get behind them, and yet they may be the most religious men and women in the congregation. Religion is not an opinion about righteousness, it is the practise of righteousness. A religious education is not education in ethics. A religious education is the training of the religious nature. We shall not make our public schools any more religious than they are now by simply putting in text-books of ethics and trying to teach our boys and girls what is the nature of conscience and what are the foundations of moral obligation. That may be a wise thing to teach, it may be a foolish thing to teach, but that is not teaching morals. Morals are taught only when the teacher is left free to bring the whole play of her moral nature on the child, so that he will be made to abhor dishonesty and irreverence and wickedness and selfishness and greed and intemperance in every form. A religious man is not a man who is learned in ethical philosophy, he is a man who counts righteousness above all expediencies and all place and all ease and all comfort. He is not even a man who knows always what is right. It is more righteous to follow a misguided conscience than it is to try to follow another's conscience that is not misguided. Religion consists in the supremacy of the moral sense—obeying that, even

when that leads awry, and learning by the blunder what truth is.

A religious nation is not a nation that has an established church, a settled ritual, an avowed creed ; a religious nation is a nation that has in it the supremacy of conscience, and when the stress and trial come, asks, not what is expedient, not what is profitable, not what is pleasant, but what is right. What kind of a war are we engaged in? Is it a righteous war or an unrighteous war? That depends upon the motive which is inspiring us to this war. If that motive is revenge, if our motto is "Remember the Maine!" if we are inscribing on our banners what a correspondent writes to me from the West is inscribed on the buttons which men are wearing in his town "To hell with Spain!" then it is a most unrighteous, a most ungodly, and a most wicked war. And if, on the other hand, we have heard the cry of the oppressed across our border, if we have asked ourselves the question, Am I my brother's keeper? if we have answered with stern and reluctant purpose, We are our brother's keeper, if we have drawn the sword only to set the oppressed free, and mean to sheath it as soon as the oppressed are set free, then it is a most righteous and a most holy war. For righteousness depends upon the supremacy of conscience in all the phases of life. And more righteous than the War of Independence, which was to set ourselves free, more righteous than the Civil War, which was to set free men for whose slavery we were partly responsible, would be a war—God grant that this may prove to be such—for the purpose of setting free a people for whom we have no other responsibility than the broad responsibility of humanity and justice.

Religion depends not on theories; it is the life of the conscience, it is obedience to the moral sense. Religion is the life of reverence. It is not a definition of God, it is

not a theory about God, it is reverence toward God. Religion begins in babyhood, when the child is not old enough to understand even the conception of God. Children, obey your parents in the Lord, for this is right, says the apostle, this is your righteousness. Reverence begins with honor for father and mother, and it goes out into reverence for superior men and noble men. It is sometimes said that we idealize the heroes of the past. We do; we ought to. We idealize our Abraham Lincoln and our George Washington and our Thomas Jefferson and our Alexander Hamilton. We forget their frailties and their imperfections and their vices, and we remember only their virtues. Woe for the nation that does not know how to idealize its heroes of the past and to revere them.

And this reverence which begins with reverence of the child for its parents, and goes on with reverence to the idealized heroes of past history, reaches up to reverence to the Almighty and the Supreme. The evil of atheism is not that it is an opinion that there is no God—not that at all. Atheism says there is nowhere in this universe any one wiser or greater or better than we are. That is the evil of atheism; it is concentrated self-conceit. It is irreverence; not a false philosophy of life. The evil of positivism is not in its philosophy. The positivism that says there is no God we can know anything about, we can only know one another, and can only worship our own idealized heroes of the past; the positivism that looks in the mirror and bows down and worships itself is another form of self-conceit, another form of irreverence.

Theology is a definition of God; reverence is the worship of God. Religion is not a wise, ethically correct definition of God; it is reverence toward Him, not fear of Him. Fear repels, reverence attracts. It is looking up toward God, and then looking toward ourselves; and be-

cause we have compared ourselves with the Infinite and the Eternal, beholding our infirmities, our weaknesses, our littlenesses. The life of religion is the life of reverence and the life of humility. That definition of God which promotes reverence is the best definition; that which prevents reverence is the worst definition. If the old theology with its definition that God is power promotes reverence, it is a good theology; if the new theology with its declaration that God is love is so taken or so preached as to breed a familiarity that comes near to contempt, it is a bad theology. The value of theology depends on the life that it nurtures in the soul, and your religion depends, not on what you think about God, but what is the attitude of your soul toward Him.

So religion is not the form in which reverence expresses itself. It is not a ritual, it is a life. From one Bible class in Brooklyn this spring six young men have entered the Church of Christ. Two of them have entered the Roman Catholic Church; four of them have entered Plymouth Church, Protestant or Protestant churches. Which are the more religious? No man can tell. For the Roman Catholic who reveres God, bowing before the upraised wafer, has the life of reverence and is religious, and the Roman Catholic who sits in church and bows without reverence in his heart is irreligious; the Protestant who joins in the hymn of praise, his heart really rising to God Almighty while he sings, is religious; and the Protestant whose voice joins in the song of praise, and who is thinking of his stocks or his bonds or the dress of the neighbor at his side, is irreligious. Religion is not the form in which reverence expresses itself, it is the life of reverence toward God and of humility toward one's self.

Religion is the life of faith. We look upon the things that are unseen and are eternal, says Paul. The life is



more than meat, says Christ. This is faith—looking on the things that are unseen, recognizing the fact that the life is more than meat. It is faith which sees that love of beauty is worth more than a picture. It is faith which sees that appreciation of a poem is worth more than a book. It is faith which sees that the life in the house is worth more than the house which encloses the life. It is faith which sees that the invisible is eternal, and cares more for it than all things which encase it and which minister to it. Now, religion is the life of faith. Men have gone out into this invisible world and what they have tabulated and formulated as the results of their exploration in the invisible world we call creeds.

A creed is the tabulated result of the experience of the invisible life of the world. Whether it is a good thing or a bad thing depends altogether upon the use that is made of it, and not upon the nature of the creed itself. Here, my child, is a botany. If you will study it, so that having learned something about flowers you want to go out into the field and pick a flower and analyze it for yourself, your botany will do you good. But if your book is given to you by a teacher, who says you must not go out into the field to gather flowers for yourself, you must not analyze them to find out what they are, or, if you do you must certainly find them to be what was told you in the book, it is bad. If your astronomy sends you to the stars to explore them, it is good; if your astronomy forbids you to explore the stars for yourself, it is bad. We have looked into this spiritual world, and we have said, What is our experience of the Infinite and the Eternal? and the answer has come back, Father—that is what we have found. What have we learned of this Jesus of Nazareth from whose cradle sprang this whole wonderful growth that we call Christianity? and we have answered Saviour—that is what we have

found. When we compare ourselves with this Jesus of Nazareth what do we find about ourselves? and we have answered, sinner—that is what we have found. When we consider what this Saviour has done for us, when we consider what service He has rendered to us, how shall we express that? and the answer has come back, Forgiveness—that is what we have found. And these four articles embody the articles of the Christian faith: Father, Saviour, Sin, Forgiveness. We have elaborated it; we have added definition on definition and definition on definition; but, after all, the four great articles of the Christian creed are just those—Father, Saviour, Sin, Forgiveness.

It is a good plan to formulate our faith, it is a good plan to embody it in a creed, it is a good plan to use that creed as a testimony to others of what we have found; but religion is not accepting the creed. A man may analyze the history of the world, and say, I am satisfied that God is a Father and that Jesus Christ is a Saviour, and that man is a sinner and there is forgiveness, and he may be the greatest of sinners. Religion is reverence toward the Father, love toward the Saviour, hate toward the sin, acceptance of the forgiveness. It is the life of faith, not a definition of what other people have found through their faith.

Religion is the life of hope. It is not what the theologians call eschatology; it is not the theory of the future state; it is not belief in an immortality, a resurrection, a future heaven and a future hell; those beliefs may nourish religion or they may, as sometimes they have done, interfere with religion; but religion is not that—religion is the life of hope. It is the spirit in man which leads him to say, I believe there is something better for the world than the world has yet come to, I believe there is something better for me than I have yet come to. It is the spirit which says, I am discontent with all that I have accomplished yet and all that I am

as yet, but because I am discontent I will press on to something higher and better. It is the spirit which says :

“O for a man to arise in me  
That the man that I am may cease to be.”

It is the spirit which urges a man on to a higher and nobler, a diviner, a more splendid manhood. It is not looking on the bright side of things, it is not shutting one's eyes to the dark side of things, it is believing that the world has something better in store for it, and that you and I have something better in store for us if we will press forward toward that ideal.

Do you remember Cole's Voyage of Life—the four pictures? An angel watches over the cradle as it comes out from its mysterious cleft in the rocks. An angel hovers above the young man as he looks forward toward the goal which his imagination has constructed and toward which he is setting the prow of his boat. An angel looks down upon the struggling man in his manhood, breasting the storm and still having his face forward and onward. An angel floats above the old man in his serene old age, on the broad sea, out upon which he has come and from which he looks forward to the domes and the spires of the Celestial City. That angel is hope ; hope that bids the child look forward to boyhood ; hope that bids the boy arm himself for brave conflict in manhood ; hope that quickens the young man in his manhood to stand bravely and courageously for righteousness and truth, because God is with righteousness and truth ; and hope that watches over and companions the old man when the hairs grow white and the hands grow feeble and the voice grows faint, and points him still forward to a larger, a diviner and a more splendid manhood in the life that is to come. Religion is the life of hope—always dissatisfied with what has been, always expecting something better.

Religion is the life of love ; most of all, of love. The life of pity for the unfortunate ; of pity not only for the unfortunate but for the sinful. That pity which though it turn, as it sometimes ought to do, the tramp away from the door without a dime, does not turn him away without sympathy felt and perhaps expressed, for the man who through sin has brought his poverty upon himself. It is the spirit which turns the prison into a penitentiary. It is the spirit which fires with zeal a Mrs. Ballington Booth and sends her to gather saints out of prison cells. It is the spirit of courtesy and kindness and consideration that makes gentlemen and ladies and forbids one, whatever his ignorance, to be a boor. It is the spirit that makes one put himself in his neighbor's place. It is the spirit that sends a George Kennan into the wilds of Siberia, a Jacob Reis to learn how the other half lives, a Wyckoff to intermingle his own life with that of the outcast and the wretched. It is the spirit which is sending the Red Cross with our armies to Cuba. It is the spirit which is inspiring teachers in our mission schools, among all the colored population of the South, and the great band and army of missionaries in other lands. It is the spirit which utters itself sometimes in words. Wise is it to utter itself in words. There are men who love, and yet cannot somehow form the words of love, and women who give love and yet cannot somehow say they love. But the spirit of love, when its tongue is loosened, is the spirit that makes home sweet and sacred and joyous. Tell your mother sometimes, young man, that you love her ; it will do her good. Tell your wife sometimes, old husband, that you love her ; it will put new life into her heart. Tell your husband, bashful wife, sometimes that you love him ; a little coddling now and then is relished by the strongest men. But after all, deeds are more than words, and the best love shows itself in deeds ; for love that is pity to the unfortu-



nate, mercy to the sinful, affection in the home, is service to all men everywhere. And this is religion—not what we think about life, but what it is in us; for this is to follow Christ. We admire Him, we reverence Him, we love Him, not because He framed an eloquent ritual, not because He formulated a wonderful creed, not because He taught a new philosophy, but because, in the quietest, simplest, humblest, most natural life, He never turned aside from the straight path of duty, either driven by fear or attracted by interest. He revered his Father, and walked in a humility that was never self-degradation; He lived as one that sees the invisible, and men knew it; He was radiant with hope in the darkest night of the world's civilization, and He loved as never man loved before or since. To hope, to see, to love, to obey, to revere, this is religion.

Inspire us all with this life; teach us to test and measure all things by this life; help us all to live this life which Thou hast interpreted to us by the life of Him who is the Son of God. For whose sake and in whose name we ask it. Amen.

## THE CREED : A TESTIMONY, NOT A TEST.

*“ And Philip said, if thou believest with all thine heart, thou mayest. And he answered and said, I believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God.” (Acts, viii. 37.)*

THIS verse you will find in the old version of the New Testament ; you will not find it in the new or revised version of the New Testament. The reason you will not find it in the new or revised version is that the best scholars are of the opinion that it does not belong in the New Testament ; and I have selected it for my text this morning, because it does not belong in the New Testament. It has crept into the New Testament at a very early date ; and its creeping into the New Testament at a very early date illustrates the corruption which has entered into the Church of Christ and done a great deal of damage to the Church of Christ. Let me read the passage, omitting this verse :

“ And Philip opened his mouth, and beginning from this scripture, preached unto him Jesus. And as they went on their way, they came unto a certain water ; and the eunuch saith, Behold, here is water ; what doth hinder me to be baptized ? And he commanded the chariot to stand still ; and they both went down into the water, both Philip and the eunuch, and he baptized him.”

That is the story as it appears originally in the New Testament. But some early scribe thought that was not quite safe ; here was this eunuch baptized without any evi-

dence whatever that he had accepted the creed of the church. So this scribe, to guard against the danger which he thought might creep into the church from that omission, inserted the text I have read—"And Philip said, If thou believest with all thine heart, thou mayest. And he answered and said, I believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God." This is, I believe, the only instance in the New Testament in which a creed, even the simplest, is made a test of church membership ; and this instance is not in the New Testament. A creed is a testimony ; it never ought to be a test ; and the transference of the creed from being a testimony into a test is that corruption of which I spoke a moment ago, the first instance of which is found in this incident which constitutes the text of this morning's discourse.

Let me try and make clear the distinction between a testimony and a test. A Church of Christ is a body of men and women who are loyal to Christ as their leader ; a body of men and women who believe in Him, and because they believe in Him are His disciples, wishing to learn from Him ; are His followers, wishing to do His work in His way. As their life comes short of this ideal, they have a common desire to express their penitence, their regret that they have fallen away from it ; they have a new sense of penitence. They have a new sense of dependence, too ; a new sense that they are not sufficient for the exigencies of the new life on which they have entered. New desires grow up in them to be like this Christ, to do His work better, to be worthier of Him ; and so new desires arise in their hearts, and a new purpose animates their life. They no longer say, as Paul says in the seventh of Romans, What I am doing I do not understand ; they do understand ; they mean to do Christ's work in Christ's way. Thus a new experience of loyalty, a new experience of dependence, a

new experience of penitence, and a new experience of consecration enters into their life. They wish to give expression to this ; and out of this new experience comes a hymn-book. The hymn-book is the expression of the emotional life of a Christian body of men and women.

But there grows out of this new life something else than emotional experience ; there grows a new view of life. They believe that Jesus was born in Bethlehem ; that He lived ; that He died ; that He was crucified ; that He was buried ; that he rose again from the dead. And through this belief, as through a window, they look upon life, and life takes on a new meaning. They have a new understanding of it ; life seems to them broader, larger, deeper than before. And they wish to give expression to this new view of life. God is nearer to them. He is no longer a far-away God ; merely a just judge ; merely the creator of the universe ; He who was the father of Jesus Christ is their father, because they are Christ's. They have, too, a new view of the future ; for the eternal life, which was but a vague and indefinite idea before, has become clear and definite to them through their belief that Jesus rose from the dead. They are not content merely to give expression to their emotional life ; they also wish to give expression to this new view of life, this sense of the Fatherhood of God, of the divine humanity of Christ, of the splendid future of the race ; and out of this intellectual side of their experience grows the creed. The hymn-book is the expression of the emotional life of men and women who are trying to do Christ's work in Christ's way ; the creed is, or ought to be, the expression of their intellectual life—their thought-life.

Now, no person would think of making the hymn-book a test of membership. No person would say, You cannot come into our church unless you will sing "Crown Him with many crowns," or "Souls of men ! why will you scatter?"



which we have just sung. We come to church out of various experiences, with various temperaments. Some have come with their cup running over with gladness; they want to express praise; some with experiences of sorrow; the seat is vacant that once was filled, and the heart is surcharged with grief, and they do not want to sing of joy, they want to sing of comfort. Some have come with a sense of achievement; they have accomplished something and want to sing a song of triumph. Some have come with a sense of failure, and want to sing a song of penitence. What sort of a church would that be which would say, You are not Christians, you cannot be members of this church unless you all sing the same praise, the same penitence, the same comfort, at the same time. Our hymn-book is the expression of our emotional experiences, but it is the expression of the varied experiences of varied Christians. We sing, "Crown Him with many crowns," and one who came with His head bowed down with sorrow listens to the first verse, and listens to the second verse, and sings in the third verse, because she has got from the glad notes of others a glad note herself. Our hymn-book is no test, but it is a testimony.

What our hymn-book is the creed of the church ought to be. Not a test, but a testimony; not something which men must believe, but a product of their experience and the common expression of it. If, indeed, one should have strayed into this Plymouth Church this morning and heard our singing and said, I do not care for any of these hymns, they mean nothing to me, he would not come into our church. Because we say, you must sing our hymns or you cannot come? No! but because he would not wish to come. If one should come into this church and say, let me see your year-book, I do not care for your kindergartens, I do not care for your Sunday-schools, I do not care for your

boys' clubs, I do not care for your missionary associations, I do not care for all this work, it is nothing to me, we would not exclude him because he did not believe in kindergartens or Sunday-schools or boys' clubs or missionary associations; he would exclude himself because he does not care about the work we are engaged in. And if he should say, I do not believe in God as the Father of the human race, nor in Jesus Christ as the Saviour of men, we would not exclude him because he does not believe in our creed; he would stay out because he sympathizes neither with our emotional life, nor with our active life, nor with our intellectual life. But to make the creed a test is as incongruous as to make the hymn-book a test.

The creed never was made a test in New Testament times. The verse which I have read this morning is, I think, though I always hesitate to affirm a negative, the only verse that indicates any kind of creed test applied to the question, May I join Christ's church? The test is always different. It is always a practical test; never a test of feeling, never a test of thinking; always a test of doing. Christ comes to Peter, James and John, at their nets, and says, Follow thou me; and they leave their nets and follow Him. He comes to Matthew, sitting at the receipt of customs, and says, Follow thou me; Matthew leaves his table and follows Christ. Christ does not say, What do you think? The test is a test of active work, of service, of loyalty, of following. The rich young ruler comes to Him and kneels down before Him, so full is he of emotion, and addresses Him Good Master, recognizing His authority, but when Christ says, Go sell all that thou hast and follow me and you shall have treasure in Heaven, the young man goes away sorrowful. The test is action, not feeling; not thinking, but doing. Christ meets Paul on the road to Damascus. Paul says, What wilt thou have me to do?

Christ does not say, Do you believe? nor, Do you feel? Christ says, Go into Damascus and it shall be told you what you shall do. The jailer at Philippi startled by the earthquake, comes, falls down before Paul and Silas, and says, What shall I do to be saved? Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ and thou shalt be saved. Then He takes them out of prison, washes their stripes, ministers to them, runs the risk of losing his life by the service he renders to them, and is baptized. He is not asked to subscribe to any creed; he is not asked what he thinks or how he feels. He has done something because of his new life, that is the best testimony. War has broken out; a recruiting sergeant addresses a group of young men. Are you patriotic young men; will you serve the country? One young man says, I am patriotic, I will join in singing the Star Spangled Banner. The sergeant replies, I am not looking for men to sing; I am looking for men to fight. Another man says, I am patriotic, I believe this is a just war, a necessary war. The sergeant replies, I am not asking what men think about the war. I want to know whether you will enlist; that is the one question. And the one question which Jesus Christ addresses to men is not, What do you think, nor, How do you feel; it is this : Will you enlist?

The creed ought to be simply the common testimony of the church and the church has made it a test; it ought to be an open door at which we should come and stand and say, Whosoever will, let him come; and we have made it a sentinel guarded gate, and have said no man can come in unless he knows the password. And the result of this has been a false test. There are thousands outside the Church of Christ that ought to be inside, and hundreds inside the church that ought to be outside, and it is rather difficult to say which would do the most good—to have the thousands come in or the hundreds go out; for the false test has shut

out thousands of men and women who would answer to the test which Christ Himself prescribes. They are following Him ; they are going about doing good ; they are feeding the hungry, clothing the naked, ministering to the sick, visiting the imprisoned ; they have the spirit of Christ ; but they are too conscientious to say that they believe in the creed, and so they stay outside. And, on the other hand, there are not a few in the Church of Christ who are orthodox in doctrine and not in practise ; who can subscribe to all the creed, but who give no hour of time to Christ's service, and very little money to Christ's treasury, and show very little of Christ's spirit in life. The creed is the test by which they have been measured by the church, and the creed is the test by which they have measured themselves.

The creed as a test includes those who ought to be excluded and excludes those who ought to be included. "Suffer little children to come unto me and forbid them not, for of such is the kingdom of Heaven." Imagine Christ standing at the door of the church, on one side, saying that, and the officers of the church standing at the door of the church on the other side, and saying to the children coming out of the Sunday-school, You cannot come in unless you believe in metaphysical statements of doctrine which the theologians themselves do not understand !

Making the creed a test instead of a testimony has created divisions in the church ; for the creed has not only been made a test, but articles have been added to it for the purpose of making the test more exclusive. So we have today denominations separated, not by their creeds ; by the subordinate articles in their creeds. They will all say : We believe in the Bible ; in God the Father ; in Christ the Divine Saviour ; in future punishment ; but they add, We do not define the relationship of Christ to the Father in the same way, and we do not believe that the nature of the



punishment will be the same ; we do not think that baptism should be administered to children, only to adults, or we do not think it should be administered to adults only, but also to children. And so we have tacked on minor articles, making each one an exclusion. Suppose a man should come to us and say, I want to join Plymouth Church, and we should say to him, Do you believe in the kindergarten? No, I do not. I think little children should be taught in the nursery. Then you cannot join Plymouth Church, we believe in kindergartens. And another man says, I would like to join your church. Do you believe in boys' clubs? No, I do not. Then you cannot join us, because we believe in boys' clubs. But this would not be so absurd as it is to say, You cannot come into this church unless you believe that only adults should be baptized, or if you do not believe that infants can be baptized. The church has been broken up into fragments, not by making long creeds, but by having creeds and by making the creed the test of membership.

But I am inclined to think that the greatest evil of all which has come into the Church of Christ in these latter days by supposing the creed to be a test of membership, has been the reaction in many quarters against any creed, and the result an emotional, emasculated, invertebrate church that does not know what it thinks, that does not think anything, that has not any testimony to give, that has no commonalty of faith, that is simply an emotional body. The Church of Christ ought to know what it thinks. It is a testifying body ; it ought to have a testimony to give ; but the testimony which it gives ought not to be the test of membership in the body. The children of this world are wiser than the children of light. If political parties acted with as much folly as the churches, to bring a concrete illustration to bear on our topic, it is very doubtful whether

President McKinley would be the President of the United States. If the Republican party had said to every man who wanted to vote for Mr. McKinley, You cannot vote for him unless you believe in a high protective tariff, and the fact that you do not believe in free silver is not enough ; it is at least questionable whether he would have had votes enough to elect him. We do not act in that way in politics ; if the man will work with us, we welcome him. If the man will work with the Church of Christ, we should welcome him ; and we should no more require that a man subscribe to every article of faith in the creed, than we require that he should sing every hymn in the hymn-book.

The Church of Christ has a creed. This oldest creed is one which grew up gradually. Testimony after testimony was uttered by the church, and these testimonies flowed together, until at last, after a lapse of three or four centuries, they grew into this confession of faith :

I believe in God the Father Almighty, Maker of heaven and earth. And in Jesus Christ his only Son our Lord ; who was conceived by the Holy Ghost ; born of the Virgin Mary ; suffered under Pontius Pilate ; was crucified, dead, and buried. He descended into hell ; the third day He rose from the dead ; He ascended into heaven, and sitteth on the right hand of God the Father Almighty. From thence He shall come to judge the quick and the dead.

I believe in the Holy Ghost ; the holy Catholic Church ; the Communion of Saints ; the forgiveness of sins ; the Resurrection of the body ; and the Life everlasting.

Plymouth Church is an independent church. It values its liberty too much to barter it away for any supposed ecclesiastical advantage arising from organic union and subjection to external authority. But I venture, speaking for Plymouth Church this morning, as well as to Plymouth Church, to affirm that this common creed of the Christian Church is our testimony also, though not our test. It does

not stand at the door ; it does not exclude any man or any child ; we require no subscription to this nor to any other statement of belief ; we should as soon think of requiring subscription to a hymn-book or a prayer. But it is the expression of our faith. We believe that the Creator of the heavens and the earth stands in personal relation to every one of us, as a father to his child. We believe that His Son has come into the world, and has lived, and suffered, and died, and risen from the dead, that He may give us a new conception of God, and a new teaching of what humanity ought to be. We believe that the Spirit of God broods the hearts of the children of men, comforts them in their sorrow, illuminates them in their ignorance, leads them in their perplexity, lifts them out of their trouble and their downfall. We believe in the Church of Christ as the body in which the Spirit of God dwells and through which it is manifested ; in the communion of saints, the fellowship that is deeper and broader and larger and richer than any communion of statehood or of country. We believe in a God who forgives sins, and cleanses the unclean, and purifies the impure, and strengthens the weak and uplifts the fallen. We believe in this life as the mere precursor and opening to life, the mere bud that will blossom out into an unknown eternity. We believe in the resurrection of each individual soul. We believe in his continued personality. We believe, therefore, in the recognition of friends and the continuance of earthly friendships, and loves beyond the grave. And it is because we believe in this Christ, and this Father, whom He hath revealed, and this forgiveness of sins which He has brought, and this Spirit of God which dwells among men, and this spirit of Christ which is to abide upon the earth, this Gospel and this future life to each individual soul, it is because of this our common faith, that we are joined together in this brother-

hood. Were it not that it might seem a sensational and dramatic episode on this opening Sunday, I should be inclined to ask you to rise and join with me in repeating this faith of the Christian Church. It is mine, it is yours. Our hymn-book contains hymns from the Roman Catholic Faber and Newman; the Unitarian Holmes and Longfellow; the Quaker Whittier; the Calvinistic Toplady; the Arminian Wesley. We are one with them all in our song. And we are one with all Christ's people of every name and speech, in our faith in God the Father, Christ His Son, the Spirit, the Sanctifier and Comforter, the forgiveness of sins, the universal church, the human fellowship, the eternal life. One faith and one song unite us with all Christians everywhere—Unitarian and orthodox, Quaker and Episcopalian, Roman Catholic and Protestant. From our different churches, creeds and songs go up a little way in different dialects, but they have not gone far before they mingle in one great song and one great confession before the throne of God.



## “THE DOOR OF OPPORTUNITY.

*“And he gave some, apostles ; and some, prophets ; and some, evangelists ; and some, pastors and teachers ; for the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ : till we all come in the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ.”—Ephesians, iv. 11-13.*

IN these words Paul describes the functions of the Christian Church. It is to make perfect men and women ; and to make them perfect after a particular type of manhood that is afforded by the life and character of Jesus of Nazareth.

We are coming back from our summer vacations ; we are entering afresh upon our church work ; what do we propose to ourselves, this fall and winter, in Plymouth Church ? Why are we a church ? what are we going to do in and through this church, at the Mayflower, at the Bethel, in the Sunday-school, and in this church service, and the various auxiliary organizations that are connected with it ? We have come here at a time when the public mind is greatly interested with new and important questions. We are on the eve of an important State campaign, and we have very earnest desires that some one in particular shall be elected Governor of the State—perhaps we should not all agree who that some one in particular should be. We are on the eve of a National campaign, and the question what shall be our currency will be indirectly, if not directly,

affected by the election. We have entered into negotiations with the sister State of Canada to secure a better understanding and better relations with her. The question presses upon us, what is our duty toward far-distant peoples, toward whom we had no recognized duty when this congregation separated last spring? what are our duties toward the people of Cuba, of Porto Rico, and of the Philippines? It is not strange that, with these discussions pressing upon us, these discussions filling the public press, these discussions really important in their relations to our State and National welfare, it is not strange if in our church gatherings these shall seem to be the pre-eminent questions. And this is the more natural because they have relation to our church life, and to religious truth. The question, for example, what shall be the legislation of this State respecting the liquor traffic, is involved in the coming campaign, and certainly that is a question to be decided not merely by considerations of political expediency, but by ethical and moral considerations. The question of the currency is a question which touches very closely honesty, and must be governed by ethical principles. The question of our relations to foreign peoples is a question of human brotherhood; and whether we shall have no relations, or whether we shall have the relations of a protecting people endeavoring to promote liberty, justice and equal rights, or whether we shall have the relations of a great, strong people trying to use weaker people for our own advantages, is pre-eminently an ethical question.

Nevertheless, though I do not disregard these questions, nor minimize them, nor put them in the background, though I am, perhaps, as much interested in them as any man or woman in this house, though I hope to take my share as a citizen of the United States in endeavoring to reach some just and right conclusion upon them, nevertheless, these are

not the most pre-eminent questions of our life. It is important to make good laws, it is important to make pure States, but it is more important to make good men and good women; and the function of the church is only indirectly to secure good laws, to make good cities, to make good States; it is primarily to make good men and good women.

I say this is the pre-eminent question—because all organizations exist for individuals, the individuals do not exist for the organization. The church exists that it may make holy men and holy women; and, if it fails in this, nothing it can do, no creed to which it can subscribe, no ritual which it can utter, no cathedral which it can construct, no benevolences in which it can engage, count for anything. "Though I speak with the tongues of men and of angels, though I give my body to be burned, though I furnish my goods to feed the poor, if I have not love, it profiteth nothing." The development of the individual character is the end of all organization. What is the State for? What is the difference between a good State and a bad State? What, if I may use the comparison without unduly appealing to your American prejudice, what is the difference between Spain and America, and why is the one State better than the other? Not because the one has a stronger navy, or can shoot its guns better, or has a braver army, but because the one, by its public school system and its free religion, makes good, true, honest individual men and women, and the other fails. The end and object of states, as the end and object of the church, is to make good men and women. That is the end and object of law. "A good law," says Mr. Gladstone, "is a law that makes virtue easy and vice difficult." That is the test of legislation. The end of all organism is the individual.

On the other hand, it is impossible to have a good

organism except by means of individuals. In vain you reform your ritual, in vain you recast your creed, in vain you rectify your political platforms, in vain you reform your industrial organizations, in vain you pass the political power from one party to another party, like the shuttlecock between the battledores—in vain all this unless the men and women of the state, and of the church, are pure, true, good, honest. You cannot make a sound ship with rotten timber, and you cannot make a sound state with corrupt men. We abolish feudalism, we abolish slavery. Do it, and leave the old covetousness in the hearts of men who work and men who employ labor, and the old evil will appear in a new form, under free competition. Sweep one party out of power and put another party in power, and leave the old corruption in, and you will have a new ring in place of the old ring, and a new corruption in place of the old corruption; the blood poisoning will remain, and it does not make much difference what we call the microbe. Individual character is the essential thing. There is something more to be done than to reform municipal governments, to reform state governments, to adopt policies—it is to make good men and women.

Moses has told us how to make a good state.

"Moreover, thou shall provide out of all the people, able men, such as fear God, men of truth, hating covetousness; and place such over them to be rulers of thousands, and rulers of hundreds, rulers of fifties, and rulers of tens: And let them judge the people at all seasons."

We cannot do that unless we have the able men, who are men of truth, who fear God, who hate covetousness; we cannot do that unless the men who are to elect our officers are men of truth, men who fear God, men who hate covetousness.



Paul has told us what is the true solution of the industrial problem.

“Servants, obey in all things your masters, according to the flesh; not with eye-service, as men-pleasers, but with singleness of heart, pleasing God; and whatsoever you do, do it heartily to the Lord, and not unto men. Masters, give unto your servants that which is just and equal, knowing that you also have a Master in heaven.”

There is not an industrial problem that is not rooted in this; that does not depend on servants who are serving not with eye-service. You who are masters know that; you who are mistresses know that. You want clerks in your store and servants in your kitchen, who do not seek simply to satisfy your eye, and who require your watchful care, but who have a conscience that directs and a sense of responsibility to themselves and to their God. And, on the other hand, no servants, no employees, can ever secure their just and equal rights until employers come to recognize the other half of this prescription—Masters, give unto your servants—not that which is the least you can give, the least you can get the service rendered for, the least possible wage, but that which is just and equal. We must have just and noble men, and God-fearing men, for employers and for employed. Then the industrial problem is solved, and not before.

This is specifically the function of the church. It is not to make new laws or new states; it is not to enforce the laws that already exist; it is to make new men and new women. I honor the clergy. I think it would be difficult to find in any group gathered from any profession, a higher average of intelligence, of courage, of honor, than you will find in the clergy of America; but when the clergy make laws they do not do any better than other folk. We

are not experts in legislation ; we are not experts in questions of political policy. I have my opinion respecting the Philippines, and I shall utter it, but probably not from this pulpit, unless it be on Thanksgiving Day. But we ministers know no more about those National problems than the men in the pews, and often not so much. This is not the function of the ministry ; this is not the function of the church ; the specific, divine function of the church is to make right men and right women.

This is what the Sabbath is given to us for. It is given to us that we may drop for a little while the questions which are perplexing us in the house, in the office, and in the market-place, and may come face to face with the larger, grander, diviner problem how to make men and women. The objection to the Sunday newspaper is not that it makes Sunday work. It does not. The work on the Sunday newspaper is done on Saturday ; it is the Monday newspaper that makes Sunday work. It is not necessarily irreligious reading ; it may be or it may not be, that depends on the editors. It is this : That the Sunday newspaper sweeps into the Sunday the whole current of the week-day life, which, for the time we should drop out of our thoughts, that we may give our whole attention to the larger, diviner and more fundamental problem, how shall men and women become God-fearing, honesty-loving, covetous-hating men and women. This is what the Bible is given to us for. Not as threads out of which to weave on the loom a philosophy, a creed ; not to tell us how old the world is, or how old the human race is ; not to tell us whether sin came into the world through one mode or another mode. Paul has told us very clearly what the Bible is for.

"All Scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine [that is, teaching], for reproof, for

correction, for instruction in righteousness : That the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works.”

That is what the Bible is given for. To show men they have gone wrong—that is reproof ; to show them how to get right—that is correction ; to instruct them in the path of right-going—that is instruction in righteousness. It is given to make men and women.

This is what the ministry is for, and the church service. It is to breed such an atmosphere, to inspire such a spirit, that when men and women shall come into the church, before as yet the minister has uttered a word, they shall begin to feel the change, as one feels the change when he rises from the miasmatic valley to the mountain heights above. It is to make such an atmosphere in the church that those who have come in sorrowing shall find God wiping away the tears from their eyes, and those who have come in distraught and discouraged shall begin to lift up their heads, and let the light of heaven shine upon them, and those who have come in careless and indifferent, and thinking that the earth is nothing but a place for making money, shall begin to see that there is some nobler end and feel some divine aspiration, and shall go forth,—the tempted, the discouraged, the self-conceited, to get the one comfort, and the other courage, and the other humility, from the life and the character and the spirit of the Christ, manifested in the aspirations and prayers and praises of His followers.

It is for this the Christ is given us ; it is for this the story of His life is written in these Four Gospels ; that we may see what manhood is, that we may understand what a right man and a right woman are. It is for this He gives us a gospel of the forgiveness of sins, that we may disentangle the feet that are in the mire, that we may heal the

sick, that we may give sight to the blind. Every Christian congregation is a pool of Bethesda. All that gather here are somehow lame and halt and blind and diseased, and those most of all lame or halt or blind or diseased who know it not. And still the Master is here, and still he says, Wilt thou be made whole? and still with every benediction he bids you rise, take up your bed and go forth with a larger strength and a more splendid sense of duty. It is for this he gives his church power on earth to forgive sins; it is for this he gives us the gospel of power, that we may make connection between the individual heart of man and the heart of God and put into the tempted the song, "I can do all things through him that strengthened me."

Other than ministers have this work to do. The merchant is so to carry on his business that his clerks will be better men; the woman is so to carry on her household that the servants will be better women; the statesman is so to administer in politics that every utterance of his shall appeal to the higher sentiment; the journalist is not to forget individual men and women in his journalism, and is to use the newspaper to lift men up, not to drag men down; the mother is to minister not to a household only but a home, and make not only meals but life. But the one institution which exists for this and nothing else, the one institution which may center all its energies and all its life on this one object—to make men and women, is the Christian Church. For that it was organized; for that it exists.

It is to this work, then, I call you and I call myself this fall as we take up our work—to make men and women like Christ; who shall meet temptation as he met his temptation in the wilderness; who shall carry the spirit of helpfulness into society as he carried the spirit of helpfulness into the wedding at Cana; who shall face the opprobrium of right doing as he faced the howling mob at Nazareth;



who shall dare vested interests when they are vested wrongs as he dared the Pharisees in the Temple ; who shall carry comfort and consolation into every home where sorrow has gone, as he carried them to the sorrow-stricken house in Bethany ; who shall be able to say to the sinful and the outcast God forgives you ; who shall love and serve ; who shall rejoice with those who rejoice and weep with those who weep ; and who, when death comes, shall look through the grave to the land which lies beyond, shall see the angels where others see but the dead, and know that the living is not to be sought in the tomb. As long as the Christian church does this work, as long as it promotes this higher life in men and women, so long the world will need it, so long mankind will come for it. The anæmic village in New England, from which the life-blood has been flowing away, the red corpuscles of its blood all gone, leaving it pale and gaunt and half alive, needs, not a new school, not a new law, but a new life-blood that only the church and the Christian ministry can put into it. This is what is needed in the fevered town in the far West, where the men run eagerly to and fro seeking they know not what, driven by the fire in their bones—it needs a peace of God that passeth all understanding, that shall calm and quiet and give stability. This is what our cities, poisoned with political and commercial corruption, need ; not a change of administration, not a transfer from one ring to another ring, and one machine to another machine, whether the machine be Democratic, Republican or Independent ; what they need is a new life-blood of honesty, a new life-blood of God-fearing and God-loving and God-serving that shall sweep all the poisonous corruption from the city's sewers out and leave the city cleansed and purified. This is to be your work in the Sunday-school this afternoon and these coming Sunday afternoons.

If you could have been with God in the first creative days, and He had said to you, I will give you power to make the flower, would it not have been strange? If He had said, you may say, Light be, and light shall come and bring day with it, would you not have gladly used this divine power. If He had said, You may speak, and the waters shall separate into the waters above the firmament and the waters below the firmament, and the mountains shall lift their brows out of the ocean at your command, would you not rejoice in this creative strength given to you? But He has done more than that. He has said to you, Sunday-school teacher, He has said to me as a minister, You, poor as you are, weak as you are, incompetent as you are, you may make men. The flowers shall fade, the clouds shall disappear, the very mountains shall crumble, and the waters shall be dried up, and the very earth itself shall be consumed with fervent heat, but man, the man you have made and I have made, he shall live on as long as God himself shall live. You and I may help to make men.

I do not like the phrase "revival of religion." It connotes machinery and sensuous excitement, and prayers for the sake of praying, and songs for the sake of singing; but never since I have been in Brooklyn, and never, I think, since the period of the Civil War, did this nation so much need a revival of religion as it needs to-day. Not of the religion that is content with words of prayer and praise chiefly, not with religion that takes hold of men with a transient excitement which disappears when the meeting closes, but a revival of religion that means honest men and pure women and noble society, a revival of religion that means faith and hope and love—the faith that sees, the hope that purposes and the love that achieves. And coming back from my vacation, and looking into your faces, Sunday-school teachers, officers of this church, members

of this church, I beseech you, as I beseech myself, that we may work together this fall and winter heartily, sincerely, earnestly and prayerfully for such a revival of religion as shall make men and women of the stature of Jesus Christ.

Make so clear before us, O God, the door of opportunity, so clear to us the path of duty, so apparent the crown of glory, that we, entering in through the opportunity, and walking laboriously yet ever faithfully in the path of duty, may at last receive as Thy free gift the crown of righteousness, which is the crown of glory. Through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

## “OUR LEADER.”

“\* \* \* *because as he is, so are we in this world.*” (1. John, iv. 17.)

THIS might mean that the condition of the Christian is like the condition of the Christ. It might mean—He suffered persecution, you are to suffer persecution. It might be equivalent to Christ’s saying : “If they will not hear my word, neither will they hear yours ; the servant is not above the master.” But it is very clear from the context that it does not mean that. John is asking respecting the nature of God and the nature of man, as God’s child. “God,” he says, “is love ; and every one that dwelleth in love, dwelleth in God, and God dwells in him ; and in this thought that God dwells in him is the love made perfect, and because God dwells in him and love is made perfect he has boldness in the day of judgment, he has no fear of the future.” And then he adds : “because as He is, so are we in this world.”

How that strikes at the root of one of the most common heresies in life! the heresy that the object of religion is to prepare men mainly for another world by something outside their own character, not to prepare them primarily for this. How it strikes at the root of all notions that a man can live any kind of life he pleases, and then be transported by a kind of miraculous transference to a celestial city at the last through a form or a ceremony ! “As he is, so are we in this world.” How it strikes at the root of



that other heresy, that a Christ life is an impossible life, or an impracticable life, or, at least, that it is not put before us as a possible and practicable life; that it is divine and we are human, and we cannot be expected to live a divine life; that it lies as an ideal toward which we are to tend and into which by and by in the long process of ages humanity will come! No; "as he is, so are we in this world." John states it as though it were an actual historical fact—something accomplished. So clear to him is this ideal a practicable ideal, so clear to him is it that this is the life that we are to live, can live, may live, that he speaks as though we already were living in it. "As he is, so are we in this world." Of course, none of us will think it means that we are to be as He was in the details of His life. He wore long, flowing robes. We do not think we must wear long, flowing robes to be His followers. He talked Aramaic. We do not think a man must talk Aramaic to be a Christian. He was not married. Most of us probably think a Christian may be married. He was not a voting citizen in a free republic. None of us in this congregation thinks a Christian must refuse to vote because he is a Christian. He was an itinerant minister. We do not suppose that you must all abandon your business, and I my stationary pulpit, and set ourselves to do the work of itinerant ministry. We must go deeper than this; we must understand the Christ better than this, if we are to understand what is meant by the declaration "As he is, so are we in this world."

What was He in this world? I think, if we take up the Four Gospels and read them, we shall see, first of all, that this Jesus Christ was not in the world to do His own will. He did not have a will of His own, from which He deviated now and then to do another's will; He was all his life long doing that other's will. He had a strong will, a firm will,

a resolute will, an inflexible will. No week-kneed, vacillating, invertebrate man was he. And this strong, resolute will of His was set to do the will of another; as the strong will of a captain is set to the will of his commander-in-chief. "I have come," He said, "not to do my own will, but the will of my Father, which is in heaven." When He did not know what His Father's will was He waited for it to declare itself. Again and again He was urged to do this or that, and He replied, "No, my hour has not yet come, the Father has not given me my command, I will not yet." Sometimes He was in perplexity as to what that will was. Once in the beginning of His life He went into the wilderness and stayed there forty days, fasting, praying that He might find out what was the purpose for which His Father had sent Him into the world. Once, at least, He dreaded lest He should fail to do His Father's will. It was the one time in His life when a great agony pressed upon Him with awful torture, and He wrestled in the garden in Gethsemane with prayers that could not be uttered lest He should fail to do His Father's will, lest He should break down in the one great, supreme moment of His life. He came out strengthened to drink the cup. All His life long it was the one set purpose, the one guiding star, the one controlling rule that He might do the will of His Father which was in heaven.

And I think, if we look a little further in the Four Gospels, we shall find out also what it was that He understood to be His Father's will. It was that He might establish a new social order on the earth—what He called the kingdom of heaven or the kingdom of God. He made His disciples pray—"Thy kingdom come, Thy will be done, on earth as it is in heaven." His very earliest preaching was "the kingdom of God is at hand." The first sermon of which we have any full report was a setting forth of the principles

of the new kingdom of God which He had come to establish on the earth. His second great sermon—a series of parables by the seashore—all relate to this kingdom of God, how it would grow up, what were its obstacles, what was the spirit and the power that would animate and control it. When He sent His twelve out on their errand, He told them to go, preaching "the kingdom of God is at hand." When He came to stand before Pilate and Pilate said, Art thou a king? He said, I am, thou sayest truly, for this very purpose was I born, and for this very purpose came I into the world. Not more clear is it that Cæsar thought to establish a kingdom of which he should be the head, that Kossuth thought to liberate Hungary, that Washington believed that he might establish a new free nation on this side of the Atlantic Ocean than that Jesus Christ lived and suffered and died that He might bring a new organic life upon the world. Sometimes He called it the kingdom of heaven, because it was the kingdom with which He was familiar. It was a kingdom of the celestial sphere; a kingdom of love and service, which is the law of heaven. And sometimes He called it the kingdom of God, because it was a kingdom in which all men's wills would be set, as His will was set, to do the will of the Father in heaven; in which the world would not be made up of many men with many minds and many purposes and many conflicting wills contending one with another, but in which the world would be made up with all men having one will, to do the will of the Father which is in heaven. This Christ was no mere good-natured philanthropist, traveling about from place to place, doing good as it was convenient, healing here a few sick, feeding there a few hungry, teaching a few ignorant. These were the incidents of His life. He came into the world to do His Father's will, and He understood that the Father's will was the establishment of a kingdom that

might be called the kingdom of heaven. Since it centers around God as the planets center around the sun, that might be called the kingdom of God. To this end He devoted Himself with absolute singleness of purpose.

Much is said about self-sacrifice. What do we mean? As I read the story of Christ's life, I do not find the story of a man who wanted Power, and whenever Power knocked at the door had to turn away; who wanted Pleasure, and whenever Pleasure unrolled its pictures before him had to turn away again. I find the story of one who had a set, definite purpose in life, and when that one set, definite purpose was made, all things that stood in the way of it, all things that impeded it slipped away from him. As the leaves of the blossoms drop when the fruit is come, as the boy casts off the boyhood clothing when he emerges into manhood, as the child forgets his primer when he learns to read the book, so these lower things he cared not for, because he cared for another and a higher, and a grander thing. At the close of the Civil War General Armstrong found a lot of negroes, ignorant, besotted, poor, lazy, idle good-for-naughts, gathered in his camp at Hampton, and he said, I will set myself to work to see what can be done for them—and he did; and for twenty-five years or more thereafter he traveled about the country, raising for their education from twenty-five to fifty thousand dollars. I do not believe there is a man in this congregation who has worked as hard to make money as General Armstrong has worked to make money, and he never took a cent of it. The money went for the maintenance of that school and the carrying on of that work. I have seen him myself, at supper table, so interested in his topic of the negro that he forgot to eat, and his neighbor had to call his attention to the fact that he had food before him; and yet it was General Armstrong who once said in my hearing, "I never



knew what self-sacrifice is." Because he had settled it once for all; he had put the purpose before him, and having put the purpose before him, all things centered on the accomplishment of that one purpose. When, last June, you said, We will go into the country, and you closed your roomy house, where you could roam about as you pleased, and went to a boarding house and shut yourself up in one or two rooms to live in a trunk, you did it because you deliberately chose to take the little rooms for the larger benefit coming from the summer vacation; and you did not complain because your trunk was not a closet, and your two rooms were were not a whole house. When a man starts for the Klondike, if he is a wise man, he considers beforehand whether the result he is going to achieve is worth the sacrifice. That settled, the thing is to do it. He does not find fault there is no Pullman train across the mountains. When a man determines to enter the army and understands all the sacrifice that is needed for the campaign, he expects discomforts. It is only the incompetent soldier that grumbles because things are not what they are at home.

Singleness of purpose settles everything. And this is what Christ did: He did not go through the world lamenting that He could not have this luxury and that comfort, and so making sacrifices day by day and hour by hour. He once for all settled this; I am here to do the Father's will, to accomplish the Father's mission, to bring about so far as in me lies the kingdom of God on the earth; everything that helps that helps me, everything that hinders that hinders me.

So it was nothing to Him that he was poor. On the whole, the only way He could work was in poverty. And when men came to join Him, he said, Leave your fishing nets and boats and follow me; and when the young man came who was rich he said to him, Sell your goods, give to

the poor, take the same conditions that we have. It was nothing to Him that he was shut out from the best society. He would have liked it; He would have enjoyed the best society. But he had settled once for all that He was in the world for a mission, and the best society of His time was against the mission. He was not haunted by questions of fear as to duty. The one line of duty was fixed, and along that line he marched with undeviating tread. Nothing could disturb it. When He went to Jerusalem, and Thomas said, "Let us go and die with him, he did not halt. When Peter said, God forbid that you should be crucified! He said, Get thee behind me, Satan! When He was preaching, and the people said, He is crazy, and his mother tried to get him away, He simply sent out word, My mother, my brother, my sister are those that do the will of my Father which is in heaven, and went right on.

And so He lived a joyous life. I know what the prophet says—He was a man of sorrows and acquainted with grief; and I know how this aspect of His life has been painted and pictured and sculptured in the history and the arts of the church; but the prophet looked far across the centuries and saw the outward environment of a life lived in poverty, in separation from that which is congenial, under circumstances which, but for the eternal purposes, would have been a life of sorrow and of grief. He could not look into the heart of this man. Do you not think this man believed what He taught? Do you remember what was one of his first messages? "Blessed are the meek, they shall inherit the earth. Blessed are the pure in spirit, they shall see God. Blessed are the peacemakers, for they shall be called the children of God. Blessed are those that are persecuted for righteousness' sake, for theirs shall be the kingdom of heaven." That is what He said, and that is what He believed. And He carried in His life the joy of one who inherited the

earth, and, therefore, did not need to struggle for it; who saw God, and therefore did not need to enter into the theological debates about Him; who was happy in persecution for righteousness' sake, because persecution for righteousness' sake hastened on the kingdom of righteousness on the earth. I know what Isaiah said—"man of sorrows and acquainted with grief"—but I also know that in the very last hour of His interview with His disciples, when He was about to go up to the crucifixion, almost His last word was "My joy I give unto you." I know it is said that He wept, but never laughed. Yes, wept, but never for Himself, never over His own sorrow; wept at the grave of Lazarus, as through that grave he saw the sorrows of other weeping ones through all the ages; wept, as out of the triumphal procession he looked down upon Jerusalem and saw the doom that awaited it; wept for others; while his heart was full of the joy of self-sacrificing service for His God.

Thus in the world, seeking to know His Father's will, seeking always to do it, seeing as His Father's will the building up of a new order and a new kingdom in the world, a kingdom of love and of righteousness and of purity, setting Himself to this with a singleness of purpose that settled all questions of sacrifice instantly and forever, living this life joyously, referring to the sports of children, to the dancing and merry-making of the harvest, to the festival occasion, always with approbation, never with contempt—this Christ lived in the kingdom about which He taught. The kingdom of heaven was not to Him a kingdom in the future to which by and by He was going, nor a kingdom up above Him from which He had descended and to which He would return again; He lived in the kingdom of heaven. He was in it, and therefore He had the joy that was the life of it.

Can a man be in two places at once? No, but he may be in two atmospheres at once. A professor comes out of Yale or Harvard or Princeton to undertake a little work of university extension, or he comes down into a college settlement and gathers the ignorant and the unkempt and the careless round about him, and he belongs to the kingdom of letters while he teaches literature. And they know it, they see it; they understand that this man is not of them; that he is another kind of man; that he has another kind of life than theirs; that he has come to bring that life to them, and that he is living it now. A teacher takes a deaf and dumb child and undertakes to teach him how to speak, and while teaching him how to speak this teacher lays aside the ordinary methods of speech of her life and comes down to the infirmities and the incapacities of the deaf and dumb and talks his language for him. Does she then cease to hear or cease to speak? Ah, no; she comes out of her larger life and yet carries it with her. So this Christ lived a double life; He lived a life in the kingdom of heaven while He was living on the earth. He had not to go far to find His Father, as sometimes we have to go. He recognized the infirmities of men and told them to pray in spite of obstacles; but He never found an obstacle to His praying; it was easy to Him. "I have meat to eat that you know not of," He said to His disciples, "you will scatter and leave me alone, and yet I shall not be alone, for the Father is with me." And when they saw Him transfigured on the mountain top, they were not surprised; it seemed the most natural thing that this man who had walked with them as a man from another sphere should be seen for this moment as in the other sphere, transfigured, luminous. And so He lived a double life; for while He lived in the kingdom of heaven He lived on earth. Most human was He, most thoroughly human, ministering to men, coming down to men,



really coming to them, really entering into their life, really sharing it, a man among men. No simple mover here and there as opportunity chanced for Him, but one who of deliberate and set purpose entered into the human life and shared it with humanity.

He sometimes grew very weary and worn with the stupidity of His disciples, but their stupidity could not separate Him from them. He sometimes wondered at the sluggishness of the people, but their dull ignorance could not separate Him from them. He flamed out with indignation against the deliberate sin of hypocrites and Pharisees, but even the deliberate sin of hypocrites and Pharisees could not separate Him from them, and the invective of His words ended with a lament for them and a cry to them to come back to righteousness and to God. Nothing, nothing, no folly, no ignorance, no sin could separate Him from men. He spoke sometimes with weariness, He spoke sometimes with wonder, He spoke sometimes with indignation, but never did He speak of men with contempt. He respected men.

This or something like this, it seems to me, this Christ was in the world: One who sought only to know what the Father's will was and to do it; one who found this Father's will to be the bringing about of a new and splendid kingdom on the earth, and who girded Himself to that one purpose; one who set Himself to that with a singleness of purpose, such as made all apparent self-sacrifice easy; one who in that singleness of purpose to do His Father's will in the bringing about of His kingdom upon the earth lived a human life, yet lived it with God His Father, carrying with Him, not around His head an aureole of glory, as the ancient painters painted it, but around His whole person a luminous atmosphere of life and love that shone from Him because God dwelt in Him. With such a picture as this,

only infinitely finer, grander, deeper, larger and more celestial, John, the beloved disciple, John who knew Him, John who understood Him better than anybody else, John who lay on His bosom, John who saw His divinity as no other person saw it, John said, "As he is, so are we in this world." Christian brethren, I leave you to ask yourselves the question, as I ask it of myself, As He was, are you, am I, in this world?

## OUR CITIZENSHIP.

*"But seek ye first the kingdom of God, and His righteousness."  
(Matthew, vi. 33.)*

LAST Sunday morning I tried to point out to you that Christ Himself sought first the kingdom of God and His righteousness ; I tried to show you what were some of the essential characteristics of Christ's life ; that He came to this world, not to do His own will, but the will of the Father which had sent Him, and that He understood that will to be the establishment on the earth of a new kingdom, which He sometimes called the kingdom of God, because its central principle is loyalty to God ; sometimes the kingdom of heaven, because it is the kingdom of ordered love which prevails in heaven ; and that while He was on the earth He still lived in this kingdom of God or this kingdom of heaven and proclaimed it to men. He was only at work in the world about three years, and that was not time enough to establish such a kingdom, to work such a revolution, to substitute hope in the hearts of men for dull despair, and love for selfishness, and faith for sensuousness ; indeed, He said, more than once, that this kingdom of God or of heaven could not be made, but it must grow ; it could not be manufactured, but it must be cultivated. While He still lived He called a few men about Him to be His followers ; that is, to unite with Him in establishing and maintaining this kingdom of ordered love, this kingdom of

heaven, this kingdom whose central principle is loyalty to God, doing not our own will, but the will of the Father who hath sent us, in establishing and maintaining this kingdom upon the earth; and when He died He left it as a heritage to them and those who should follow after Him, to all those who had the vision to see the beauty of such a kingdom and the desire to accomplish it and the heroism to undertake its accomplishment.

In the Sermon on the Mount, He guarded them against the danger of trying to do two things at once. Do not, He said, imagine that you can build up this kingdom by taking for it a part of your time or giving to it a part of your energy. Make it the first thing. Do not make the first thing getting clothes or shelter or food, the very necessities of life, make the first thing building up and maintaining the kingdom of unselfishness, of love and faith and hope, the kingdom of heaven and of God; make it the first object of your life to build up and maintain this kingdom, as I have made it the first object of my life to build up and maintain this kingdom, and leave the other things to follow.

But when the minister addresses such a congregation as this, and urges this high ideal upon them, they answer to themselves (if not to him) this is quite impracticable. You can give yourself wholly to building up and maintaining the kingdom of God, because for that very purpose we give you a salary and provide for your needs. But what shall I do, says the merchant, who have my store to keep! Do you advise me to close it to-morrow morning and go off to look after the interests of the kingdom of heaven? What shall I do, says the mother, who have my children to care for? If I go off to a nunnery and enter a sisterhood and give myself to building up and maintaining the kingdom of God on the earth, who shall take care of my children? What



shall I do, says the doctor, who have my patients to attend to? Shall I leave them to sicken and die while I give myself to building up and maintaining the kingdom of God upon the earth? These are very practical questions, and the questioners are quite right. The merchant is not to leave his business to follow Christ; the mother is not to leave her children to follow Christ; the doctor is not to leave his patients to follow Christ. You are not to leave your various vocations in order to give yourselves to the work of building up and maintaining the kingdom of God.

What is this kingdom of God—this kingdom whose central principle is loyalty to God, this kingdom of heaven—this kingdom which is like the ordered love of heaven? What does it include? Is it something apart from us? Has it a territory of its own and a time of its own and a character of its own that distinguishes it from the common life? Not at all. The kingdom of God is to be a kingdom of God on the earth made out of human materials; it is to be a kingdom of the present society transformed by a new spirit. The kingdoms of this world are to become the kingdoms of our Lord and of His Christ—this is the declaration. Let me read you what one of the earlier Hebrew prophets says about it:

“In that day shall there be upon the bells of the horses, holiness unto the Lord; and the pots in the Lord’s house shall be like the bowls before the altar. Yea, every pot in Jerusalem and in Judah shall be holiness unto the Lord of hosts: and all they that sacrifice shall come and take of them, and see the therein: and in that day there shall be no more the Canaanite in the house of the Lord of hosts.”

You have been in that great, crowded, crushing city of London, with the whirl and the buzz and the noise of its streets in your ears; and out of the crowded thoroughfares and out of the halls of Westminster where the politics are

going on, you have slipped into Westminster Abbey, and have sat down there among the ashes of the noble dead ; you have seen the splendid monuments which have been reared to their memory ; you have heard the music which seems to drip out of the very ceiling and ooze out of the very walls, and you have said : This is holy ground ; I am in the kingdom of heaven for this short hour. Zachariah had a different vision. He did not think there should be some splendid cathedral, some noble abbey, some beautiful worshipping place into which men might retreat from the bustle and stir of life, but the holiness that drips from the ceiling and oozes from the wall, the holiness that is seen in the golden and silver implements on the altar, the holiness that shines in the white robes of the vested choir, the holiness that is spoken in the words of the priest—this holiness shall also sound in the very tinkling bells of the dray horses, in the very rattle of the cabs, in the very cry of the omnibus drivers, and be graven on the very pots and kettles of the houses.

All things are to be brought into the kingdom of God. Not only all things, all thoughts. Says Paul : "Casting down imaginations, and every high thing that exalteth itself against the knowledge of God, and bringing into captivity every thought to the obedience of Christ." Ministers' thoughts? Yes. Sunday-school teachers' thoughts? Yes. Thoughts of the woman in the kitchen ; thoughts of the merchant in the store ; thoughts of the lawyer in the court room ; thoughts of the soldier in the camp ; thoughts of the statesman in the closet ; thoughts of the doctor at the sick-bed ; thoughts of the mother in the sick-room ; all brought to the building up of the kingdom of God. If this is not possible, then Christ is wrong. If the mother must leave her children or the merchant his store or the lawyer his clients or the doctor his patients in order to help

build up and maintain the kingdom of God, then the kingdom is impracticable, and Christ was wrong and Paul was wrong and the prophets were wrong.

What is necessary to be done to make the kingdom of God on the earth? What sort of men and women must there be, and what should these men and women be doing? There must be some men who will be the heralds of this kingdom of God ; who will go to men who have erred and strayed, who are apathetic and indifferent and rouse them to see ; who will give themselves, going from place to place and from man to man saying, There is something better than the kingdom of selfishness, there is a kingdom of love ; there is something better than the kingdom of Mammon, there is a kingdom of God on the earth. There must be warriors for this kingdom. There are forces in operation to overcome it and to beat it down. There were in Christ's time as there are in our time. The same interests that undertook to destroy Christ are still trying to destroy Christian truth and Christian life. Unselfishness cannot lift itself up and make itself aggressive without fighting selfishness. Love itself is the enemy of all forms of unloveliness and there must be warriors who stand to battle for the freedom of man, for the right of man to worship God according to the dictates of his own conscience, for the liberty of man to walk untrammelled of human law save as human law be necessary to keep him from doing wrong to his neighbor. There must be in the time of the Reformation a Luther, in the time of religious war a Cromwell or a William the Silent. There must be warriors in our own time, when corruption threatens to undermine the state, just as there must have been warriors for the Union when open war threatened to destroy it. There must be warriors to fight for the kingdom of God. There must be teachers, men whose business it shall be to understand what the prin-

ciples of the kingdom of God are and how the principles are to be applied to daily life, and to all the varied problems of daily life, and who must give themselves in singleness of purpose to the one work of teaching. If the teacher undertakes to do the work of the warrior or the work of the evangelist, he makes a mistake. For the most part, the teacher must be a teacher and the herald must be a herald. If the teacher attempted both to teach to his Christian congregation what are the principles of the kingdom of God and how they are applicable to human affairs, and also to go out to those who have never heard of the kingdom of God, or are indifferent, and endeavor to attract them to it and draw them to it, he is likely to do neither well. The evangelist must be an evangelist, the teacher must be a teacher, the warrior a warrior. There must be workers in this kingdom; executive and administrative men who are to afford aid, and as there are men who are teaching truth, so must there be men who are incorporating that truth into church action, into organic life, into the full mechanism for carrying this kingdom of God on.

But is this all? Heralds to proclaim, teachers to instruct, warriors to fight, workers to afford it aid—is this all? There is something a great deal more important than all these; it is the kingdom itself. Of what avail to go heralding, saying there is a kingdom of God, if there is no kingdom? Of what avail to teach the principles of the kingdom if nowhere those principles are manifested? Of what avail to fight for the kingdom if the kingdom itself does not exist? The first thing, the most important thing, the vital and essential thing is the existence of the kingdom itself. And this is to be a kingdom of all things and a kingdom of all thoughts. It is a kingdom of God in the business, it is a kingdom of God in the family, it is a kingdom of God in politics, it is a kingdom of God in society.



Then the herald can go and say, Behold, there is a kingdom, come and join it; then the teacher can say, Behold, there is a kingdom, these are the principles of it, and thus are they applied to daily life; then the warrior can say, There is a kingdom worth fighting for, and for it I put on my armor and sacrifice myself and die if need be. What is necessary to make patriotic Americans? There must be ambassadors to represent America at foreign courts, and perhaps immigration agents to invite Italians and Poles and Hungarians to a land of freedom across the sea; there must be teachers in our public schools to tell the children what is the history of America and what are its principles, and to unfurl its flag before them, and to inspire loyalty in their hearts; there must be soldiers to put on the sword and shoulder the musket when America is threatened by foreign foe or by domestic treason; there must be statesmen to incorporate into the laws of the nation the principles of America, the principles of liberty and justice and equality, the principles that are on the whole incorporated by the Declaration of Independence and the Constitution of the United States. There must be all these, but is this all! No, far more important than ambassador or agent, than teacher or warrior, is America itself. The mother who is making a sweet American home, the business man, the railroad president who is pushing a railroad across the continent and with steel bars is binding state to state, the preacher who is not preaching politics, and yet is preaching such principles of righteousness applied to public affairs as are elevating steadily the conscience and the moral sense of the nation, the merchant who is seeking to push on American trade by all legitimate and noble methods, are not these also making America? and of what avail the immigrant runner, of what avail the public school teacher, of what avail the warrior, if they are not in the homes, in

the counting-rooms, in the business offices, in all the land, a thousand patriotic Americans who are making America to one who is talking about it.

To seek first the kingdom of God and His righteousness is not to drop everything and go after what is called the conversion of souls. There are men who must drop everything and give themselves to bringing men into the kingdom; there are men who must drop everything and give themselves to teaching the principles of the kingdom; there are times when patriots must drop everything and stand as soldiers brave and heroic for that kingdom when it is endangered; there are men who must bring their executive ability to bear to build up the kingdom in all its organic machinery; but far more important than these all combined is making the kingdom by living in it.

It is mine to talk about the kingdom, it is yours to live the kingdom. Paul has defined the kingdom. He says it is not meat and drink, it is righteousness and peace and joy in the Holy Spirit; that is, in holiness of spirit made holy by communion with the Spirit of God. It is righteousness—walking in right paths; it is peace—an end to the furrowed brow and the careworn cheek and the hurried, worried, vexed and irritated spirit; and joy—what kind of joy? the joy of those beatitudes: Blessed are the meek, blessed are the poor in spirit, blessed are the pure in heart, blessed are the persecuted for righteousness' sake—the joy of holiness of spirit.

It is a great thing to be permitted every Sunday morning to talk about this kingdom, to talk about right paths, to talk about peace, and to talk about blessedness that comes through holiness; it is a great thing to be permitted to go into the outside world and tell men who have never heard of it, men who are apathetic and indifferent, of the glory of entering into this kingdom; it is a great thing in time of

danger to stand steadfast as a sentinel guarding this kingdom from attack ; it is a great thing to work with steady hand and patient purpose in the upbuilding of all the organic machinery necessary to carry on this kingdom, but it is far greater to walk in right paths, to possess the peaceful spirit, and to be radiant with the joy of holiness.

I imagine you filing before me, one after another, as this sermon is through, and saying to me, What shall I do? I will give you the text I would read to answer your question :

“Then said he to the multitude that came forth to be baptized of him, O generation of vipers, who hath warned you to flee from the wrath to come? Bring forth, therefore, fruits worthy of repentance, and begin not to say within yourselves, We have Abraham to our father : for I say unto you, That God is able of these stones to raise up children unto Abraham. And now also the axe is laid unto the root of the trees ; every tree therefore which bringeth forth not good fruit, is hewn down, and cast into the fire. And the people asked him, saying, What shall we do then? He answereth and saith unto them, He that hath two coats, let him impart to him that hath none ; and he that hath meat, let him do likewise. Then came also publicans to be baptized, and said unto him, Master, what shall we do? And he said unto them, Exact no more than that which is appointed you. And the soldiers likewise demanded of him, saying, And what shall we do? And He said unto them, Do violence to no man, neither accuse any falsely ; and be content with your wages.”

And so as I imagine you thus coming before me saying, What shall I do, I want to seek first the kingdom of God? One says, I am a lawyer, what shall I do? I say, Go back to your office and carry on your administration of law so as to make justice regnant in the community. And another says, I am a merchant, what shall I do? and I say, Go back and write holiness on the bells of your horses ; re-

member that your clerks are your brother men and treat them as brethren. Another comes and says, I am a manufacturer, what shall I do? and I say to him, Treat the workmen that are in your employ as your brother men, and ask yourself not the question what is the least I can possibly give them and the most that I can get out of them, but what is fair and right and reasonable and just as between man and man, what I would have them do to me if they were employers and I workman. And the mother says, I have my little children, what shall I do? and I say, Love your little children, teach them to love one another, walk your own way toward God and lead them by your hand toward God. Do not leave your children to seek first the kingdom of God, nor your store to seek first the kingdom of God, nor your office to seek first the kingdom of God, nor your place wherever it is to seek first the kingdom of God—the kingdom of God is needed, just where you are.

Oh, sometimes I feel the exaltation of preaching, and sometimes I am bowed down with the humiliation of it; for I stand here and preach charity to women who are giving their lives to the service of love, and honesty to men who sacrifice in business affairs because of their conscience as I have never been asked to sacrifice, and to teachers patience and service, whose practical service and real patience outrun my own imaginings; and sometimes I wish that I could go from this pulpit and give my message to other peoples that I think need it more. This is the kingdom of God: Righteousness, peace, joy in the Holy Spirit; holiness written on the bells of the horses, holiness engraved on the pots and kettles in the kitchen.

The first thing, therefore, for you to do, whoever you are, is to find out whether you are in this kingdom or not. Some men are born into it, and some get into it by unrealized process. Some men never know how they got into



it, have always lived in the kingdom of the unselfish, in the kingdom of love, in the kingdom of God, and then think they are not in it because they do not know how they got in ; and others live without as foreigners and one day wake up to the fact that they are in a splendid kingdom and remember the very day when they took their oath of allegiance. It does not matter. Are you in God's kingdom? It is well sometimes to put the question to ourselves, What are we here for and what are we doing with ourselves? Are you living for yourself, self-centered, then you are in the kingdom of selfishness. Are you living on the whole to make other people happy, then you are living in what I call the kingdom of good nature. Are you living to make the world better, then you are living in the world of philanthropy. Are you, in this effort to make the world better, recognizing Christ as a Master, recognizing Him as a leader. Are you seeking to do Christ's work in Christ's way, then you are in the kingdom of Christ. It cannot be very difficult for you to find out. It is not a question what you believe ; it is not a question whether you were baptized ; it is not a question whether you belong to a church ; it is a question whether you are self-centered or living under the impulse of haphazard good-nature or are seeking the welfare of your fellow-men and seeking that welfare of your fellow-men wherever you are and in all your avocations under the inspiration and the leadership of Christ as your Master? This kingdom of Christ offers a divine life and a divine Master to follow. There are some who hear the voice and yet do not see the form ; some who follow Christ and think they follow duty, and some who follow Christ and think they follow philanthropy. They are not the happiest ; but I do not see how any man who believes that Jesus Christ came into the world to make a kingdom of God on the earth, who believes that through all these cen-

turies He has been making a kingdom of God on the earth, that through all these centuries by gradual processes He has been substituting unselfishness for selfishness and hope for dull despair and faith for sensuousness, and that he can himself just where he is do something to help make this kingdom by himself being a part of the kingdom—I do not see how he can help living with joy in his heart and radiance on his face. Seek first this kingdom ; seek it in your lives where you are.

Elevate our aspiration, purify our desires, cleanse our vision, and strengthen our heart, that we may see clearly, desire strenuously, stand bravely for Thee and Thy work on the earth. Amen.

## “CHILDREN OF GOD.”

*Deuteronomy, xiv. 1.*—“*Ye are the children of the Lord your God.*”

*Jeremiah, iii. 22.*—“*Return, ye backsliding children, and I will heal your backslidings.*”

*Acts, xvii. 28.*—“\* \* \* *as certain also of your own poets have said, For we are also his offspring.*”

EACH of these verses declares, you observe, that men are God's children. The first declaration is made to the Children of Israel. It is made by the prophet to them as though they had not yet been trusted and tested and tried. “Ye,” he says, “are God's children.” It might well have been apprehended by them as an indication that they were God's favored ones. You, apart from the rest of mankind, you He has chosen to be His household. The second declaration is made by the prophet after they have been tested and have failed. “You have sinned,” the prophet says, “you have forsaken the Lord your God, you have become idolaters, you have sinned against me in innumerable ways, and still you are my children. Return, ye backsliding children.” They could not have thought that they were God's children because they were His favored ones, for this sentence stands in the midst of a chapter vehement in its denunciation of their iniquity. The third of my texts is taken from Paul's address on Mars Hill. He is speaking to Pagans—Greeks who had never heard of Jehovah—who knew nothing of the Old Testament (the New Testament did not exist); who knew nothing of Christ—nothing of

what we regard as the essential doctrines of Christianity—nothing of Christianity itself, nor anything of Judaism; and he quotes one of their own heathen poets to illustrate the truth. "You pagans," he says, "are God's offspring." Here you get the third application of the same great truth: First, those who are within the covenant of God and have made the covenant with Him are God's children; second, those who have violated the covenant and sinned against God in every conceivable way—they are God's children; and, third, those who have never heard of Him and are apparently ignorant of Him, except as nature has taught them something, those who have lived wholly outside of what we call the pale of revelation—they are God's children.

It is the broad, general declaration that seems to run all through Scripture, that man is God's child. Not alone the intelligent man, the virtuous man, the Jew man or the Christian man, the converted man, or the regenerate man—man is God's child. He is God's child before he has been tested, while yet he lies in the cradle; he is God's child when he has deliberately chosen the ways of wickedness and gone into them with his eyes wide open, knowing what he does; and he is God's child if he has never at mother's knee lisped "Our Father which art in heaven."

The relationship between parent and child is a twofold relationship. It is a moral relationship, which involves, on the one hand, a certain duty of guidance and protection and education on the father's part, and, on the other hand, a certain duty of loyalty and service and obedience on the child's part. But this moral relationship, this duty of protection on the one hand, and of obedience on the other, is really based on another and a deeper truth—that this father and this child, these parents and these children, belong to the same stock; the same blood flows in their veins; they have the same essential nature. These truths under-



lie the doctrine of fatherhood as it is to be found in the Old Testament and the New Testament. There is first the moral relationship ; man owes duty toward God—a duty of obedience, of loyalty, of service and (I say it reverently) God owes duty toward man—a duty of protection of guidance, of just government, of righteous dealing. This is what is meant by the declaration, over and over again, that God is a righteous God. That is, He fulfills all that a child, weak, infirm, and sinful, has a right to expect of his Father, and more. But this relationship depends upon the deeper truth, that God and man are kin, that man is made in God’s own image, that he is made like God, that he possesses the attributes and qualities of God, that he is in his inherent and essential nature divine. He may have overlaid that divinity, he may have done much to undermine and despoil it, but still he is of the same kin as the Father who created him, and out of this kinship grows the relationship of service on the one hand and of protection on the other, of obedience on the one hand and of righteous government on the other.

This, then, is the truth I want to put before you this Sabbath morning—that we are all the offspring of God. Are there some little children here this morning, are there some mothers here whose hearts are with their little children at home? These little children are God’s children whether or not they have been baptized, whether or not they have been brought into covenant relation with the church ; to them the prophet of Deuteronomy says, “You are the children of God.” Are there any men or women here who are conscious that they have sinned against God, that they have done more than strayed away from Him, that they have deliberately set aside the interests of their nobler life for worldly interests, that they have deliberately chosen death rather than life, the world rather than God,

—then I say with the prophet, "Return, ye backsliding children." Whatever your sin, however far you have gone, whatever you have done, still you are children of God. And, finally, could I conceive it possible that some men had strayed in here this morning who had never heard of the Gospel and knew nothing about it, to whom it was a mere name or not even that—that some Chinaman or some Hindoo had come in here who was really living in a Christian land, and yet dwelling in darkness, to him I would say with Paul, "Your own poets have told you that you are the offspring of God."

The untested, the tested and failed, the ignorant and unknowing, you are God's offspring, you are made in His likeness.

The witness that we are God's offspring is manifold. It is found, in the first place, in our supremacy over all the rest of creation. He has given us something of the power which He Himself exercises. We are masters over the animal kind and subdue them, not by our greater strength, not by our greater astuteness, but by the divinity that is within us, by the quality of the spiritual nature which we possess that they do not possess and which separates us from them. We are masters over the natural forces of the world. Man is stronger than Niagara Falls; although it may sweep him to destruction, he also may put his hand upon it and tame and harness it and make it light his streets and carry his packages for him. Man is stronger than the lightning; although it may strike him to the earth and kill him, it cannot control him, and he can control it. In more radical words than I have dared to use this truth has been put before you by the Psalmist: "What is man, that thou art mindful of him? and the son of man, that thou visitest him! For thou hast made him but little lower than God." That is the revised version, and it is unquestionably the

right interpretation of the Hebrew. “Thou hast made him little lower than God, and crownest him with glory and honor. Thou madest him to have dominion over the work of thy hands, and hast put all things under his feet. All sheep and oxen, yea, and of beasts of the field. The fowl of the air, and the fish of the sea, and whatsoever passeth through the paths of the seas.”

God tests your kinship with him by giving to you and to me the power which He Himself exercises over the world of nature. And he gives a greater supremacy than that—far, far greater—He gives you supremacy over yourself. He endows you with his freedom. Man puts manacles on his fellow man; God never. God makes man free, and then says to him, “Choose the right or the wrong, do the good or do the evil, choose death or choose life; I put the responsibility, the power, the self-supremacy on you. Man has in himself and in the very citadel of his nature this power of holding the helm of his own life, directing, controlling, shaping his own destiny. If man is not a free moral agent, then God is not. All the freedom that God himself possesses He has passed over to these children of His, and lets them cut their fingers, blister their feet, burn their hands until they smart, and go down in ways that lead to death, and still says, “You are gods, you shall do according to your will, suffering the consequences if you do wrong, rejoicing in the consequences if you do right, but masters of yourself. I know not how you feel, but I think a world of free moral agents, men who can do right or do wrong as they will is infinitely better, with all the sin that blots and blurs and mars it, than a world of well-ordered machines that do according to the will of another without will of their own.

And with this supremacy over nature and this supremacy over the world, the Father calls you to do His work in the

world. "We are co-workers together with Him." To whom does that apply? Doctors? Yes. Preachers? Certainly. Sunday-school teachers? Yes. But to these not one whit more than to merchants and lawyers and manufacturers and doctors. The world of men, whether they know it or do not know it, are doing God's work in the world, endowed with God's power in the world, given the control of themselves and power over nature in the world, that they may do God's work. Are you a manufacturer? God also is a manufacturer, putting His parts together with wonderful skill, which you endeavor to imitate in vain. All your laboratories operate from His laboratory; all your chemistry emanates from His professor's chair. Are you a merchant? It is His winds that fill your sails and His forces that drive the busy wheels of your industry. Are you a lawyer? He also administers justice. Are you a doctor? He made the human frame and stored it with the powers of resistance to disease and co-operates with you—and more and more the doctors are coming to see that God co-operates with them, and more they are holding their hands back with caution that what they call nature but we call God may work with them and for them. Are you a teacher? He is the great truth-giver, and gathers His pupils about Him; the planetary system is the first great orrery, the first lessons are written in the heavens. Are you a mother? More wonderful sculptor than Michael Angelo or Thorwaldsen, shaping the little child by forces from within, you are inspiring the babe as God inspires you, and God inspires you as you are inspiring the babe; by the life that is within you, He and you together are shaping this child that is vital, living and immortal. You are doing God's work. You do not know it, perhaps; but whether you know it or not, you are doing God's work or setting your will to oppose Him and thwart it.



He bears this witness of our kinship with him by the strange sense of awe and of reverence that comes over all of us. Sometimes a conscious and an intelligent awe before a Supreme Being whom we dimly see yet heartily believe in; sometimes a simple, strange, inexplicable, uninterpreted sense of reverence for a something or a somewhat that lies beyond us. In vain we try to satisfy our conscience by taking the standards which our fellow-men give to us. In vain the merchant says, “I do no worse than my fellow-merchant in the trade.” In vain the woman in society says, “Other women in society tell white lies as I do, and one must do so.” In vain the lawyer says, “If I would win my cause, I must arrest justice and falsify truth.” In vain the preacher says, “If I speak the truth in the pulpit I shall make disturbance in my congregation; I had better speak with guarded tongue and gesture with gloved hands.” When the merchant has come back to his home and the woman to her closet and the minister to his study, each must and does compare his life with some higher, ineffable, transcendent standard, and knows that all these human standards are idle, nugatory and vain. Though he shuts his eyes and will not look, though he shuts his ears and will not hear, still the voice of conscience speaks, still the vision of righteousness is before him, still he knows that there is another judgment than society can have, and still, whether he bows before it or not, in his heart of hearts he recognizes it. You know it. Man is not satisfied with vagueness; he is not satisfied to know the things that science tells him can be known; he is not satisfied to study the phenomena in all their varied form. Man, says Paul, searches all things, even the deep things of God. Yes, and this very fact that he is searching, following on, trying to know something of the invisible and the eternal, brings to him the witness he is not kin with the brutes but rather that he has a higher

kinship. He looks longingly through the grave and wonders what is the world, if any, that lies beyond; he looks longingly up into the skies and wonders who is the God that made the stars and rules the nations, if there be one. In vain does Dogmatism tell him he can know no more than they knew in the sixteenth century; still he struggles on. In vain Agnosticism says you cannot know anything except what you have seen and heard—still he struggles on to know, and still Paul's words come in his heart whether he ever heard them or not, no man can know the experiences of man except by the experience of man that is within him. And so, because we ever strive to know the experiences that lie beyond, we have the witness within ourselves that there is within us a dormant, divine life. Men may shut their eyes and say through despair, "No creed, no immortality, no God!" We live as though there were not. Ah, the pity of it! Not a seed planted in the ground but struggles toward the sunlight. Not a chicken in the egg but pecks away that it may break through its integument. Not a bird half-fledged in the nest but waits for the time that it may fly. And men, only men, seek to go away from the sunlight into the darkness, seek to make their prison walls stronger that they may not break through, seek to stay within the nest and never know the glory of songful flight up to the heavens. Still the soul knows there is a sunlight, though it lives in the darkness and wonders what it is; still it is dissatisfied with its prison walls and knows that there is a larger life than any it has yet tried; still it wonders sometimes, whether it will ever have the power of flight, and if not, will not the children have it.

We know this our kinship with God. We know it by the strange impulse and inspiration and aspiration and courage that come to us at times. "Be not weary in well-doing." I wonder if there is any man or woman in

this congregation who does not know the meaning of that text ; I wonder if there is any one of you who has not sometimes said, Let corruption in politics go on ; I am not going to keep up the fight ; it is no use. I have fought the liquor-shop and the licentious hall as long as I can ; it reappears over and over again. I have fought the despotism of selfishness and destroyed slavery, and it appears in forms of free competition. May I wonder if there be one of us who does not sometimes feel himself like a ship out on the Atlantic Ocean, with fire beneath the hatches, all the time pouring the water on, sometimes with more smoke and sometimes with less, and sometimes with a little hope that the fire is out ; then suddenly the passion of heat, the passion of temptation, the passion of anger, the passion of sensuality springs out again when it seemed extinguished, and you are almost prepared to say, it is no use, I will give it up. And then has there not come to you, perhaps after a sleep, perhaps after a long vacation, perhaps after an enforced rest, a new courage and a new hope, and have you not risen from your bed of sickness, it may be, come forth from your vacation, risen from your long night of sleep, with a new courage, hope and vigor and a new song ? There is more power in conscience than in greed, in right than wrong ; there is more power in God than in all the forces of hell combined. And if there were not this sense of invisible reinforcement that comes to the poorest, that comes to those who have least faith, who do not understand the words that are spoken and do not perceive the vision before us, if it were not for this inspiration that comes to us, that inspires us afresh, the world would long since have lapsed into anarchy and chaos.

Then, beyond all these, is a sense of divine communion, which reaches its supreme expression in this Supper spread before us this morning. This is the supreme symbol ; but the idea of communion with God is not confined to Chris-

tians who sit at the Lord's table. Run back over the pages of history as far as you can, and in the dim confines of the early beginning you find men and the gods sitting down at the table together; you find men spreading the table with their feasts and inviting the gods to sup with them. Superstitious you may call it; superstitious I grant in many forms it was; and yet, after all, underlying it, at the root of it, the inspiration of it is this profound sense in humanity—Christian, Jewish, Pagan—that there is a possibility of fellowship between God and man, or the gods and men; not such communion as a collie dog has with its master, but the communion of a soul with a soul that understands.

And now some men will say to me, "You are speaking as though there were no sin in the world. Do you recognize none? Does not sin estrange men from God? As a great ruin by the very character of the stones that are heaped one upon another, bears witness to the splendor of the fortress that is now forever gone, as the beauty of the pagan temples in Ephesus or Corinth, where the harbor is filled up, from which arts have departed, from which the priests have gone, where only the owls hoot at night and the jackals prey by day, as the very splendor of these ruins is witness of the splendor of the life that once throbbled there, and men still go there to find out what is divine in architecture, though the architecture be in ruins, so the very magnificence, the very awful splendor of the ruins of this race is the attestation of its divine architecture.

I am not so radical as the Psalmist; I am not so radical as Christ; I read from the 10th chapter of John:

"The Jews answered him, saying, For a good work we stone thee not; but for blasphemy, and because that thou, being a man, makest thyself God. Jesus answered them, Is it not written in your law, I said, Ye are gods? If he called them gods, unto whom the word of God came, and



the scripture cannot be broken ; Say ye of him whom the Father hath sanctified, and sent into the world, Thou blasphemist ; because I said, I am the Son of God."

Do you not see that the argument is just that which I have been trying to put before you? If the word of God can come to man, it is because there is in man a divine power to understand that word ; if the revelation of God can come to man, it is because there is in man a mirror which can reflect that manifestation ; because the disclosure and word and speech of God comes to man, therefore, says Christ, he is himself a god. You are the children of God, says Deuteronomy ; you are the backsliding children of God, says Jeremiah ; you are the offspring of God, says Paul ; but Christ, more radical than Deuteronomy or Jeremiah or Paul, says, you are gods, because the word of God comes to you and you can hear Him. Whatever life you are living, whoever you are, whatever you know or do not know, whatever work you have done or are not doing, whatever sins you have committed or are committing now, you are the children of God. You may turn away from your Father and abandon Him and refuse His authority, but still you are the children of God. You can break the moral relationship, but you cannot break the other—that is indissoluble, unalterable. You are the children of God. Come ! come ! court no longer the darkness when the sunlight beckons you stay, no longer in the nest when the bright air without calls you ; be content no longer unfledged in the nest when you might spread your wings and fly away. Come ! come ! you are God's children. Come to your home ; come to your Father.

## SAVED BY HOPE.

*"We are saved by hope."*

*Romans, viii. 24.*

THE practical man, if he will stop and consider what this verse means, not hesitating to criticise because it is in the Bible, will shake his head at it—No, he will say, hope is a pleasant companion but a perilous counselor; hope has destroyed more than it has saved; more men have been destroyed by hope in business, a thousandfold more, than by excessive caution. The hopeful man buys some suburban lots, or purchases stock, or gets what he thinks to be a mine; and because he hopes his suburban lots will be worth as many dollars a running foot as they were before an acre, and because he hopes that the stock that he bought at 40 will be worth 100, and because he hopes that his mine may bring forth untold millions, he thinks that already his lots, his stock, his mine, are worth these values, and he says so; and presently he has involved himself and the friends who trusted in his word in bankruptcy. They think he has lied; no, he has only mistaken his hopes for history. And the student of political life will say—saved by hope? It was hope that brought this nation into its peril. Why it was because hopeful men who said, We need not trouble ourselves, slavery will die a natural death while slavery, growing with its growth and strengthening with its strength sapped the life-blood out of half the nation and

corrupted the life-blood in the other half, until it was strong enough to take us by the throat, and only four years of long struggle served to determine whether we should live or no. It was thus we paid the penalty of the excessive hopefulness of serene men who said, Oh, do not trouble yourself about the future, the future will take care of itself. And religious men will say to you—saved by hope? Hope is a dangerous child to take counsel of. For men there are who will tell you that God is merciful and you need not trouble, that God is pitiful and He will pardon; do as you will, live as you will; you may suffer some little thing in the future; but, after all, we are saved by hope, go on, have a good time now, let the future take care of itself, all will be well, God is love.

I think, however, that if we will look at this text a little more deeply and will look at the meaning of hope a little more plainly, we shall see a profounder truth in the statement "we are saved by hope" than we have been wont to think. It is difficult to analyze a principle, and yet perhaps we shall get a little clearer conception of the meaning of the principle contained in this text if we try to analyze it; and I think that we shall find it is composed of these two elements, desire and expectation. A man hopes for that which he both wishes and, in larger or smaller measure, expects to obtain. If he expects to obtain it and does not wish for it he does not hope, he may fear; if he wishes for it but does not have any expectation that he can ever attain it, he will despair but he will not hope. A criminal has been tried, convicted, sentenced, and his lawyer says to him, There is one more hope, I will go to the Governor and see if I can get a pardon; when the lawyer is gone the convict still hopes because he desires to be saved and he has some expectation that he can be saved; but when the lawyer returns and says the Governor has refused the pardon,

there is nothing left, then he still expects the gallows but he does not hope for it; he still desires life but he does not hope for life, his expectation is destroyed. And the quality and measure of hope depends upon the strength and the character of these two elements. If a man's desires are high and pure and his expectation clear and strong his life will be full of inspiration; if his desires are low and mean or his expectation weak and feeble his life will not be full of inspiration.

These are fundamental questions of life: What do you wish for, and how much do you think you can get? If your wish is for the highest things, but you think there is no possible chance, you will not endeavor to get them. You remember that the fox, when the grapes hung too high for him to get, said, "Sour grapes!" No matter how sweet a bunch may look to the vision, if you say, I never can get it, you will pass on.

Now the Bible comes with its Gospel message (and the Gospel message begins with the first chapter of Genesis and does not end until the last chapter of Revelation) to quicken hope, to make hope larger and richer and better, and then to supplement it by new hopes. We are saved by this hope. It does not mean merely this: We are shut up here in a dungeon of despair, but look for a time when we shall come out again. You remember in Bunyan's *Pilgrim's Progress*, how the pilgrims were locked up by Giant Despair in the castle, and how Christian found a key that let him out into the sunlight. Hope is not that, or at least it is something a great deal more than that; it is not, You sorrow now, but you will have joy hereafter; You sin now, but you will be righteous hereafter; it is more than that. The Gospel hope comes to put a new desire into men, and along with that desire a new expectation, and so by kindling a new desire and a new expectation to create in them



a new life, and men are saved by hope just in the measure in which they get the new desire and the new expectation and see that there is something better than they had thought it was possible to attain.

The Gospel comes, then, in the first place, to tell us that we can and are to have dominion over the earth. You remember how the pagans looked upon the forces of nature? The lightnings were the thunderings of the gods; the sea was ruled by one god, the mountains by another, the clouds by another and the storms by another; all the forces of nature were gods, and man, man was the serf of these forces of nature, they were to control him, he was to bow down before them, he was to make sacrifices to them, he was to secure their service if he could, but they were supreme. Not only the forces of nature, but animals were deities. The common people of Egypt worshiped not only the forces of nature but they worshiped the very animals. The fox that fed upon the grass, the river Nile along whose banks he fed, the crocodile that burrowed in the mud, the very beetle that rolled the ball of earth beneath his feet, were all sacred deities. And the first word that greets us in the New Testament is this: Pagans, you are mistaken, you are not to bow down before these forces of nature, these animals; they are not your gods, they are your servants; you are to take them, harness them and make them your own. Genesis and science at odds! You may almost say that all practical science is based on that declaration in Genesis, that God made man and put him upon the earth and said to him, Now have dominion over the forces of nature and over the animals that disport themselves upon it age after age; for ever since science has been trying to find the way to gain that dominion, and has gotten it little by little, inch by inch, step by step. I read in the paper the other day—you probably did—that Nicola

Tesla says that he has such mastery of electricity that he can control that force without a wire, and expects to sit in his office and communicate at his will with distant sailing ships. He has not done it yet, but he says he shall. Will he? I do not know. I, for my part, have given up saying that anything is impossible. You remember how the scientists (some of them) said, You can never sail a steamer across the Atlantic Ocean. They demonstrated with figures that no steamer could carry coal enough to take it across the Atlantic, and I believe that the first steamer that came across the Atlantic brought the demonstration to America. We have run across the continent, we have sailed across the seas, we are trying to fly in the air. This Gospel message has kindled a new desire. The old pagans did not have it; to-day the North American Indian does not have it; he has no notion that it is within his possibility to rule nature; the forces of nature are to him half deified and he bows before them. But this message comes to men and inspires them first with the desire to master nature, and then with the confidence, We can. We try it and fail, and still God says, You can, and we try it again and again and fail; and still there comes the message, Persevere, you may, you can, you will; and a new life is put into mankind, and it is by the new life or new desire for mastery over nature and the new expectation that we can have it, that we are saved scientifically. It gives us, this Gospel, a new desire and a new expectation respecting what we call the ills of life and respecting disease that men did not think could be conquered. Disease came as an infliction of the gods; it was impious to fight against the gods; it was hopeless to fight against them. You remember how the Spartan Greeks laid the feeble down to die because they could not do anything for them. You remember how hospitals really came in with Christianity. You remember how the whole in-

spiration to deal practically with disease, not only to alleviate it but to do battle against it and finally to vanquish it, has come in through the Bible and through the Gospel, if you take the Gospel in the large way as including the Old Testament as well as the New Testament. Faith cure ! Why certainly. All cures are faith cures ; there are no others ; only faith in God is not folding your arms and saying to Him, You do all, it is asking Him, What have I to do? and doing that. Not the man who says, God can cure me without means, and eats and drinks and works violating all laws of health that science prescribes, and dies ; he is not the man who exercises faith. But the man who goes down to Havana knowing that he is taking his life in his hands and studies the conditions of yellow fever in that fever-breeding city and ponders the problem how the monster may be throttled, and comes home to die in our own city, to die that others may live ; this is the man who has faith ; not Harold Frederick ; Col. Waring, the man who dies that other men may live and he by his dying may vanquish disease ; he puts a new heart of hope in men, makes them see there is something worth wishing for and something that can be struggled for and something worth dying for.

So with the battle against sin ; God puts a new heart of hope in us in dealing with that. Ah, who can look at life and shut his eyes to the awful fact of sin? Cruelty, sensuality, lust, intemperance and oppression, hateful fiends all of them, and many more, with malodorous smell upon their garments. What is it to hope? To shut your eyes and say there are no fiends ! to look at these full-grown enormities and say they are but good in the making? to say there is no harm and wrong in the world, only seeds that by and by will grow to goodness but now smell badly and look badly? Is that to hope ! This it is to hope : to

say I have something better to do in the world than to be happy ; I have something better to do in the world than to be comfortable ; here are enemies worth the fighting ; I want to battle them ; that is the wish. Here at my side is a strength-Giver who will enable me to master them ; that is the expectation. I will fight on till sin is killed, for I have Eternity before me and God behind me ; that is the hope. Not to say, I think I am well, therefore I am well ; not to say, I believe I am righteous, therefore I am righteous ; but to say, I have a new wish ; it is the wish to bring purity where there is corruption and honor where there is shame, and self-control where there is sensuality, to make cities that are pure and churches that are brave and a nation that is honorable and men everywhere who are white-winged and lustrous of brow, and God helping us it can be done. Oh, if we really did but have the wish and behind it the expectation it would be true. To him that believeth all things are possible.

This hope of the Gospel gives a new meaning to industry. Take hope out of work, it is dull drudgery, and the man goes on with his work as a bit of machinery, with as little life in his heart and with not so much life in his muscle as the engine has. That is the difference between slave labor and free labor. Men say the slave was as well-fed, was as well-housed, as well-clad, as well taken care of as he is to-day. It is not true, but if it were true it would make no difference. Then he was working without hope ; then he had no wish to be industrious, and went to his task only under the impulse of a fear, driven by the lash ; then he had no expectation of accomplishing anything ; whether he worked or did not work, he would be equally well fed, well clad, well housed, well taken care of, and he was idle and lazy—so would you and I be. But liberty came and put a new desire in his heart—a desire to own land ; a desire to



have savings in the bank ; a desire to have a two-room cottage instead of a one-room cottage ; a desire to have a little home he could call his own ; a desire to be somebody and to do something ; then liberty said : You can ; it is hard work, you will have discouragement, you will have obstacles in your way, but go on, you can be somebody, you can have something, you can learn something, you can be a man ; and to-day the black man is laboring with hope in his heart and in his life, with a new desire and a new aspiration and a new expectation, and the drudgery has gone out of work. Oh, into how many a married woman's life comes drudgery where ought to be joy ! She wanted to please her husband ; she wanted to have his love and his approbation ; she counted on it ; it was her only wage. She could earn more as a professional nurse, and quite as much as a nursemaid or a cook, as she is earning as a wife, if that were all. But she wanted love, and the wages are not paid. She gets criticism in plenty, but never a word of approbation, never a word of thanks, scarcely the signs and tokens of the common courtesy that her husband as a gentleman would pay to other women ; and gradually the expectation of pleasing him dies out, and gradually even the wish to please him follows out of the door after the expectation, and she goes on living her life of drudgery because the hope has died out of it. You know this. Now Christ comes with this message to men : Work—it is not from fear ; it is not for food or clothing or shelter ; these are the mere incidents ; work means service, and service means love, and love is the highest and greatest thing in the world. He comes to be the son of a carpenter ; He does the common things of life : He calls common laborers about Him ; He beckons and the fishermen leave their boats, and He says, Follow me and you shall catch men ; He puts a new dignity into life ; He sends forth His great

apostle the tent-maker. Christianity went to freemen, to slaves, to men who never had thought life was worth living; and carried His message: There is something you can do with your industry, be not eye-servants, be not men-pleasers; remember that you have a Master in heaven; remember that it matters little for you whether you are a slave or a freeman since you are working for Him and He does appreciate and does pay love's wages. Have you ever seen the dust in the country road, when suddenly the sun breaks through the clouds and shines upon it, and all the dust is luminous and turned to gold? So this message shines upon this dusty highway of ours, and all the drudgery of toil turns golden when life and love and hope illuminate it.

Hope saves from sorrow, not by taking sorrow off, but by giving sorrow a new significance, by putting into the heart of men a desire for sorrow and an expectation to accomplish something by sorrow. A paradox? Not at all. You remember that when Hobson was starting on that perilous expedition of his on the Merrimac, which he and every man who went with him expected could only end in death, he called for half a dozen men and there were four hundred that volunteered; four hundred men who wanted to die, four hundred men who wanted to be wounded and suffer, four hundred men whose names would not go into the gazette and who would not be recognized (can you recall the name of a single one except Hobson himself?), four hundred men who wanted to be where the danger and the peril was because they had the heart of heroism in them. There have been men who have sat at the receipt of customs during all this war and watched how they could make money out of it, how they could coin the blood and the tears of their country into gold and put it in their pockets. They also are not gazetted in life, but they are gazetted in

hell; by and by their names shall be known and their dishonor flaunted in the face of all the universe; and there are other men and women (one of them told her story last Friday night in the Plymouth lecture-room), who expected no mark of honor, no reward, no office, no brevetting, who simply begged the chance to go and nurse the sick and care for the wounded, and watch over the suffering, and share their privations with them. This is being saved from sorrow by hope. Not saying, Oh, if I hope in God, He will never let any tears come, or if I do sorrow, by and by I shall be free from it; it is this: I follow after if that I may know the power of His resurrection, that I may have fellowship with His sufferings, that I may be conformed unto His death. Do you remember how in the primitive church the church itself had to make decree in order to prevent Christians from seeking martyrdom? Oh, what man is there who is a man, or what woman, who would stand in a world of suffering and see tears flowing from others' eyes, and say: Let my eyes be dry; who would walk in a procession where other men are carrying heavy burdens and say, Let me stand erect, unburdened; who want to live where others are in pain and go unanguished from the cradle to the grave! Hope is the desire to suffer and the expectation that by that suffering something will be done for the kingdom of God and the well-being of men. It is covetousness for Christ. This hope, this expectation, this desire, kindled by God, is sustained and supported by faith in Him. From a nursery one brings a little switch a few inches long. What is that? An oak. That an oak? Well, yes, it is the beginning of an oak, but leave it lying there on the table and presently it would dry and be good only for the fire; but plant it in the ground and it will grow to the stature of an oak. Take this man up and root him in God and no man can tell to what he

will grow. That is the message. "I cannot?" You and God can; there is nothing that you and God cannot do together. When He enters your life, points out to you your duty, calls you to your mission, lays on you your burden, crowns you with suffering, He stands at **your** side and says to you, Together you and I can. "I can do all things through Him that strengtheneth me."

Let a man really believe this; let him believe that the time is coming when the dread of sin will flee away; let him live in the belief that the time is coming when God's kingdom shall come in earth as it is in heaven and God's will shall be done here as there; let him live in the belief in the time coming when every man shall have mastership of himself, and shall know no other mastery, when, therefore, sensuality and vice in all its forms shall be banished; let him live in the hope of that picture which I read from Isaiah this morning, or in the hope of the fulfilment of other pictures strewn all through the Bible from Genesis to Revelation; let him live in the faith of Mrs. Browning:

"After Adam, work was curse;  
The natural creature labors, sweats and frets.  
But, after Christ, work turns a privilege,  
And henceforth, one with our humanity,  
The Six-day Worker working still in us,  
Has called us freely to work on with Him  
In high companionship. So happiest!  
I count that Heaven itself is only work  
To a surer issue"—

let him live with this conception and it will be strange if a new desire to have some share in it is not kindled in his heart.

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God of hope, fill us with Thine own spirit of hopeful-



ness, that we, not knowing Thy resources, may trust in Thee and in them, desire for ourselves what Thou dost desire for us, and be sure for ourselves, as Thou art sure for us, that if we fight with Thee we shall be conquerors and more than conquerors, through Him that loved us. Amen.

## THE LIVING GOD.\*

*Then Peter said unto them, "Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ, for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost. For the promise is unto you, and to your children, and to all that are afar off, even as many as the Lord our God shall call."*

(Acts, ii. 38, 39).

THE Bible may be characterized as a succession of epiphanies—that is manifestations of God on the earth. He appears to Abraham; calls him out of the land of ignorance and superstition; appears to him sometimes in secret spiritual conferences, sometimes in visions of the night. He appears to Joseph in dreams, telling him what to do and encouraging him in doing it. He appears to Moses, and talks with him face to face upon the mountain top. He appears to little Samuel, making his bed in the Holy of Holies by the Ark of the Covenant. He appears to David, a shepherd boy on the hills of Judea, in the caves of those same hills while he is exiled from the persecuting king, and later, even in his sins, to rebuke him. He appears to Isaiah, and Jeremiah, and Ezekiel, and Moses, and Hosea, bringing them their messages, which they bear to the Children of Israel. He appears in clearer and clearer visions, and in more and more spiritual vision, at first in dreams, then in human guise as the angel of the

\* Preached in Plymouth Church, Sunday morning, Nov. 27, 1898, on the occasion of the presentation of his resignation.

Lord, later as an inward experience interpreted by the human voice.

All these epiphanies, these manifestations of God to men, lead up to the great epiphany, the great manifestation, the coming of God to dwell with man in human form—Himself a man of sorrows and acquainted with grief. The Word of God manifested in flesh we have seen and handled, says John. I think that the great majority of Christians believe that the climax of the long ascending series of appearances of God is at Bethlehem and at Calvary; that this, the climax, was reached; and that since then we have been, as it were, descending the hill; since then we have been departing from the glory; since then we have had to look back over the centuries for our epiphany.

But this is not the testimony of the New Testament; for it declares that this long ascending series of manifestations of God, and this in some sense supreme manifestation of Him in human flesh, is itself the preparation for that superior one, that in which we live, the manifestation and disclosure of God in the spiritual experiences of men. It is for your benefit, says Christ, that I am going away; for if I do not go away the Holy Spirit cannot come to you. The very essence of this declaration is that it is better for the world that the manifestation of God should not be in visible form, should not be tangible, should not be such as we can see with our eyes and handle with our hands—but that it should be spiritual. It is better, because, among other reasons, it can be universal. It is better than any succession of epiphanies through human manifestations, because they would almost inevitably degenerate into idol worship—in man worship. So long as God dwelt in human guise upon the earth, in Palestine, so long as that was the great manifestation of Him, only a few men could be at His side, could hear His words, could look upon His life

and share it with him. The ointment was in a bottle ; very precious the ointment and very precious the bottle ; the crucifixion broke the bottle and the perfume fills the world.

So when the day of Pentecost comes, there comes with it this interpretation of its meaning by Peter : Ye shall receive the Holy Spirit. The promise is to you, and to your descendants, and to all those that are afar off ; to you Jews, to your descendants in Judaism, and to all pagan or heathen people as well. It is the promise of the universal dwelling of God in the hearts and lives of His children. One travels across what are known as the Bad Lands of the West ; a long, treeless road ; the hot sun heating the sand, and the sand adding its heat to the atmosphere ; great and various colored rocks lifting themselves up in all manner of castellated forms in wonderful beauty, and here and there a tree or a little oasis of green grass where there is some running stream or spring. But by and by, after the long day, the traveler begins to approach the Eastern border of the Bad Lands ; the trees grow more numerous, the grass grows thicker, and presently he finds himself in a garden full of luxurious vegetation. So, in the olden times, men traveled through the world, as though it were a desert. There were prophets who were oases in the desert ; here and there men who heard the voice of God, felt the presence of God, were stirred by the influences of God, and reported to their less happy fellows what they heard and saw and felt. But, for the most part, men lived without the knowledge of God ; they had not yet reached the moral and spiritual development in which the knowledge of God was possible. As spiritual development increased the appreciation of God increased. The numbers that knew Him, realized Him, rejoiced in Him, increased. With the coming of Christ there was still larger vision, and



now, if we did but know it, we have passed the desert, we have passed the oases, we have come into that epoch in which all the children of God may be prophets of God, priests unto Him, kings ruling by His power, prophets listening to His word and interpreting His word to others.

Jesus Christ has told us what is the voice, what the message of this indwelling, universal Spirit. It has sometimes seemed to me unfortunate that the word Comforter is so universally used as the name for the Holy Spirit, for we have come to think of comfort as identical with consolation, and to think that the Spirit of God has come only to wipe tears away from the eyes in times of sorrow. But the word Comforter, as you know, properly means Strength-bringer, and the Greek word, of which it is a translation, Paraclete, means one who hears another's call. So the Greek idea is, God is now so near that any man may call Him and He will hear the call; God is now so interpreted to men through Jesus Christ that any man may look upon Him, any man may be a Moses and see God in the mountain top, any man may hear His voice, for wherever God speaks and man listens is the Holy of Holies, any man may receive the vision that Ezekiel received, any man may walk with God and know His presence. Or if you turn to the English word the meaning is this: Wherever there is weakness, whenever there is any need of any kind, there the Strength-bringer stands to give the strength and the inspiration that is needed.

When He has come, says Christ, He will convince the world of sin, and of righteousness, and of judgment. Of sin, because they believe not on me; of righteousness, because I go to my Father and you see me no more; of judgment, because the prince of this world is judged. He will convince, not the prophets, not the priests, not the great men. He will convince the world. "He will convince

the world of sin." Men ask, if inspiration is universal, why not a better Bible now than in the olden time. No man will ever write, I think, a profounder expression of the sense of sin than he who wrote the 51st Psalm. I suppose myriads on myriads of men and women have found in that 51st Psalm the expression of their experience, though they never could have uttered it. No man will ever write a broader, sweeter and diviner expression of the Eternal Goodness than is written in the 103d Psalm, but myriads on myriads of men and women have found, as Whittier found, in that 103d Psalm, the inspiration to a better understanding of Him who like a father pitieth us his children. The Spirit of God working with the children of men has made universal the experience which in Bible literature is the experience of a few saints and leaders. "He will convince the world of righteousness because I go to my Father." He will show us what the true ideal of life is. Compare the ideals of life afforded by Christ with the ideals afforded by the Old Testament. Read in Judges the account of a God who tells men to destroy the wicked that they may destroy wickedness, and then compare with that the ideal afforded by Christ, who tells us to destroy wickedness by loving and pitying and redeeming the wicked, and put these two ideals side by side, both of them inspired by the same sense of justice and truth, but the one saying, Hate the evil, the other saying, By love cure the evil. The Spirit is convincing the world of the truth and beauty of Christ's ideal, so that through the ministry of God in the hearts of men they are coming to understand the true ideal of righteousness, the ideal that is reflected in the glory of Christ Jesus our Lord. "He will convince us of judgment, because the prince of this world is judged." Not that by and by God will sit on His great white throne and call the prince of this world before Him; he is judged here and

now. If Christ and Barabbas were to stand before a great gathering of people in this city of New York, there would still be men who would cry, Give to us Barabbas, and there would still be men who would cry, Crucify Him ! Crucify Him ! but there would not be one united voice going up from the same great multitude, Release to us Barabbas and crucify the Christ, while they that loved the Christ stood with silent lips, dumb, and not daring to protest. Our Christ cannot be crucified to-day and Barabbas released without a battle, for the world has learned how to judge as it never knew in the olden time, because God is working in the lives and on the hearts of the children of men.

Some men there are who know this influence, perceive it, rejoice in it, and some men know it not and still are moved and stirred by it. There are some plants growing in the sunshine, drinking in the sunshine, reflecting its glories from all their petals, and others that are still beneath the light, groping toward the sun they do not see, and yet as truly warmed and vivified as those that are in the light. So there are men who take the sunshine into their hearts and reflect it in their lives, and say, I know this is the sun, I am living in it ; and there are other men who grope in the darkness, but are struggling toward the light and know it not ; and the same voice speaks to both, the same emotions stir in both, the same desire for a higher life is in both. One knows that life is given to him by the love of God, and the other knows not whence it comes, but it is God in the one as it is God in the other. One man prepares to speak to his congregation ; as he prepares, thoughts come to his mind that he knows come to him from Robert Browning, from Carlyle, from Whittier, from Isaiah ; to another man as he prepares for his sermon like thoughts come ; he knows they come to him from his past reading and study, but he does not know whence they come.

So there are some men who know the companion who walks by their side, and other men who walk in the same path, are stirred by the same emotions, moved the same high principles and high purposes, and know not by whom they are moved or how ; but with the one as with the other God is walking. "Doubtless Thou art our Father, though we are ignorant of Thee." He knows His own, though His own know not Him.

I think to a great many Christians what is known as the doctrine of the Holy Spirit is a mystical and unmeaning doctrine. They can understand the Ten Commandments very well ; they can understand somewhat the incarnation of a Christ living on the earth in human form ; but the notion of a Holy Spirit is meaningless to them. I met the other day with Dwight L. Moody's definition of the Holy Spirit ; it is not quite orthodox, but it is fine. The Holy Spirit, said Mr. Moody, is God at work. God at work ! And this is the message of Peter here. God is at work in the world, and God who has spoken through intermediaries in the past will now speak directly, and you shall all take Him as you are able to take Him ; the promise is to you and your descendants and to those that are afar off.

Therefore it is that the Church is the Church of the Living God. It is a church not merely bearing witness to a great historic past—though it does that ; it is a church not merely of philanthropic men, brought together in order that they may accomplish something for their fellow-men—though it is that ; it is the body of Christ ; it is the organism in which the Spirit of God pre-eminently and peculiarly dwells and through which the Spirit of God manifests Himself. So all the various utterances of the Church are in some true measure the utterances of this indwelling Spirit. As the Spirit in man makes him one, whether his hand is working with the plane or with the pen, whether his eye



is looking through telescope or microscope, whether he is reciting poetry or talking in conversation, so in this Church one Spirit speaks, whether it speaks in the old Jewish ritual or in the splendid Roman service, in the Episcopal Cathedral, or in the Congregational meeting, or in the Quaker silence. It is the same Spirit in the same body working in various forms of the same great life. So in this Church of Christ are many gifts, says Paul, but one Spirit. I remember—though I cannot quote it as I would—Dr. Raymond once bringing this truth out in a prayer-meeting talk on that prayer in Ephesians, that we may be filled with all the fulness of God, with the added ascription, Unto Him be glory in the Church, by Christ Jesus, throughout all ages, world without end. The Church in all its varied manifestations is the incarnation of the same Spirit that was incarnated in the one man Christ Jesus. No one man can show forth the glory of this indwelling Spirit, but all combined can. So God says to one, Lie on a bed of sickness and show the world what the patience of God means; and to another, Enter into the battle of life and show what the heroism of God means; and to another, Enter into business and show what is the divine ideal of honesty; and to another, Sit on the bench, and show the world what justice means; and to another, Stand in the pulpit and interpret what divine truth is; and the minister, no more than the judge, or the merchant, or the man of affairs, or the invalid, is showing forth the glory of God. We have a great organ here, and the wind comes blowing through its pipes, and you hear now the flute, now the diapason, and now the great sub-bass, but it is the same wind blowing through all the various pipes. So the one Spirit of God moving on the hearts of men speaks different voices in different dialects. Still the miracle of Pentecost is continued when each in his own tongue heard the glory of God interpreted to him.

There are men in this congregation every Sabbath morning who could not follow a mystic, nor a poet, nor a prophet, nor a man of spiritual genius, but they can follow a man of integrity, a man of sterling purpose, a man of steadfast earnestness, a man of practical common sense, and who to practical common sense mates the highest and the divinest ideals of living. And so every man may hear in his own dialect the glory of God spoken through the Church.

And this is what makes the Church one ; for it is one Church ; the Church of Moses, and of Elijah, and of David, and of Isaiah, and of James, and of Paul, the Church of Augustine, and of Wesley, and of Edwards, and of Beecher. It is one Church. Why? Not because all these various men have the same spirit ; they are very different, their intellectual conceptions are different, their ideals are different, their methods are different, often they have warred one with another ; but in and through them all and back of them all is the one Spirit who controls and reveals Himself through them. I was reading last night a touching story. An Italian convict is at last, after twenty-six years, released from prison. He starts toward his home ; he wonders whether his wife will welcome him or be sorry to meet him ; he wonders whether his daughter, now married, and with her babe in her arms, will remember him. As the time comes near and the train draws closer and closer to the station his heart beats with alternate fear and hope ; the two people who are with him in that car see him get out, and they see a poor, bent, old peasant woman, with the lines of care across her face and the gray upon her hair, standing there and looking earnestly along the train—but she sees no one she knows ; they see him looking hither and yon upon the platform, casting his eyes on her—and not knowing her. But presently his face lights up ; he sees a young woman ; in her are the lineaments of the wife whom twenty-six years

ago he left. He goes to her, he calls her by name, she springs to him, takes him by the hand, leads him to her, the mother and the wife ; and when the two look into each other's eyes they know one another. And the story ends with a picture of wife and daughter walking down the road with him, while he carries his granddaughter in his arms, to their simple home. Why is it that he recognizes in the face so entirely changed the wife of twenty-six years ago? The features have changed, the body has changed, there is not a single particle of the physical material that was there then that is there now. But the spirit is the same ; it is the same wife after all. And so the Church remains through all the ages, because back of all the changes of form, back of all the changes of personality, there is one Spirit. I do not mean that all these men and women of all these ages are alike in spirit ; I mean that in them all, manifesting itself through them all, speaking through them all, as truly in them as your spirit is in your body, and my spirit in my body, is the one Spirit of God that stirs and inspires and encourages and uplifts and redeems.

What is Plymouth Church? The building? This is the third you have worshiped in. The people? There is not, I believe, a single one of the founders of Plymouth Church living in the church now ; and in these pews scarcely one who was here the first ten years of its existence. But in this church is the same Living Spirit of God that dwelt in it more than fifty years ago. Men come, men go, men live and speak and pass away, but the church is the same because the same Spirit of God dwells in it. A hierarchy of priests and bishops does not make a Church—this is the Church : The indwelling of the Living Spirit of God in the organization which is trying to do His will. Mr. Beecher dies, but the church is not rent nor broken, because it was not the spirit of Mr. Beecher, it was the Spirit

of God in the church. And when the time comes, as now very soon it must come, when I, your present pastor, whom you have nurtured and supported and loved, and who loves you, God knows—when the time comes, as it soon must come, when he must step out of the office to which you have called him and enter again into the ranks and be a layman, the church will not be changed, the church will not lose its leader or its life, for the life of the Church is the Living God and the Leader of the Church is the Christ that walks before it.

I have been very reluctant—God knows how reluctant—to reach the conclusion which I must now announce to you—the conclusion that the time is very close at hand when I must lay aside the leadership with which you have honored me, and take the place of a private in the army. I cannot tell you with what wrestlings and resistance and regrets I have been forced to it. I must read my statement of the reasons which have forced me to this conclusion lest I should not be able were I to speak, to do so with unbroken utterance.

When eleven years ago I was asked to supply the pulpit of Plymouth Church, it was frankly given as one reason for the selection that my duties as editor of the “Christian Union” would absolutely prevent me from being regarded as a candidate for the pastorate; and when, four months later, I was asked to accept the title and office of acting pastor, it was only that the church might be properly represented in church councils and similar ecclesiastical gatherings. It was not until the close of the season, May, 1888, that it was deemed possible by either the church or myself that I could fulfil the duties of the pastorate while continuing to fulfil those of editor; nor did I accept your invitation until the proposition had been submitted to my editorial associates and its acceptance had



received their cordial approbation. During the ten years which have elapsed since the final call was extended to me and I entered upon the pastorate of this church it would have been impossible for me to fulfil the duties which the two offices involve but for the great consideration exercised by my co-workers in both the church and the newspaper.

You have not demanded pastoral calling ; you have provided efficient and untiring assistance in the administrative work of the church ; you have co-operated heartily in that work, supporting it generously by your contributions and your services ; you have given open-minded consideration to every plan proposed involving departure from former methods ; you have accorded me long periods of summer rest ; you have loyally sustained my liberty of utterance whether you have agreed with the utterances or not, and many of you have come considerable distances at no little sacrifice of convenience in order to support the church in its regular services by your attendance. My associates in "The Outlook" have shown equal consideration by relieving me of all office detail.

Nevertheless, if not the work, certainly the responsibility in both fields has sensibly increased. The activities of Plymouth Church have grown somewhat greater and materially more complex. There are great advantages in preaching in a pulpit to which past history has given a national character ; but he who occupies such a pulpit cannot escape the obligations involved in the fact that his utterances are always liable to be reported far and wide, and taken as an expression not only of the church but of that unorganized party of progress with which this church has always been associated. The obligations involved in the editorial office have increased even more.

The growing difficulty and complexity of the problems of our time—industrial, political, ethical and spiritual—the

changed character of the paper, changed to adapt its ministry to the larger life, and its increasing constituency have all combined to add to the responsibilities involved in the duty of directing the utterances and controlling the policy of such a journal in such a time as ours. To add the further duty of supervising the spiritual industry of a church which with its two branches is scarcely less than three churches, and the preaching in this age of singularly commingled spiritual doubt and spiritual activity to such a congregation as gathers here every Sabbath day, and to the wider congregation which listens to the echoes of this pulpit, is—to this conclusion I have been very reluctantly forced—more than my strength is any longer equal to. It is not that your demands or those of my editorial associates are excessive. You have both asked less than you had a right to ask—the one of its senior pastor, the other of its editor-in-chief. It is with the demands of my own conscience I must reckon. I have endeavored to avoid the inevitable conclusion, or at least to delay it by abandoning other work and by laying on my associates in these two fields of Christian activity all responsibilities which do not necessarily inhere in the office of chosen leader. I have withdrawn from the lecture field, refused all invitations to sit on boards and committees of philanthropic and Christian societies and have discontinued literary work to which I had pledged myself; and my occasional absences have been rather a relief from the strain of a too continuous work than an addition to it.

Perhaps, so reluctant am I to sever my pastoral connection with Plymouth Church, I should still have hesitated and delayed had not a warning been given me this fall which scarcely needed the doctor's interpretation. He tells me frankly that I am using up vital energies faster than nature supplies them; he imperatively declares that I must pre-

pare to discontinue the attempt, though made with all possible reserve and every aid, to fulfil the duties of two such offices, either one of which would be quite sufficient to tax my fullest and best energies, and he leaves me no option but to withdraw from the pastoral work and devote myself to the equally responsible but quieter work of the pen.

I have therefore no choice but to resign into your hands the office with which for these ten years you have honored me. It is hardly necessary to say that it is my earnest desire that the result should be the least immediate injury and the greatest ultimate benefit to the church I love. It is not necessary that my work with the church should immediately cease, though it will not be possible for me to continue it beyond the present season. Within that limit I leave to the officers of the church, or to such special committee as the church may appoint, to determine the time when this resignation shall take effect.

I can never resume the labors of a pastorate ; but I hope in occasional ministries to carry the gospel of God's love in Jesus Christ our Lord to other congregations, who perhaps need it more than you because it is less familiar to them. Even inspired by this hope, the decision to retire from Plymouth pulpit would be for me very difficult, were it not that duty is never difficult when it is clear ; and this duty is very clear. But though not difficult, it is as painful to me as I believe it will be to you.

I love Plymouth Church. Here forty years ago I first learned that God is love, not merely law ; here I first received the illumination which comes from the recognition of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ ; here I received the inspiration which renewed my earlier desire to enter the Christian ministry. When, eleven years ago, I came back here, it was as a man comes back to the home

of his boyhood. No other church ever was or ever can be to me what Plymouth Church is and has been. In my preaching of the gospel of faith and hope and love I have but interpreted in words the spirit which ever abides within these walls. If I have ministered to you, much more have you ministered to me. Your faith has clarified mine ; your hope encouraged mine ; your love has inspired me in loving. With far better reason than Paul had in writing to the Romans, "I thank my God through Jesus Christ, for you all, that your faith is spoken of throughout the whole world." Often shall I "long to see you, that I may impart unto you some spiritual gift, that is, that I may be comforted by the mutual faith both of you and of me."

My love be with you all in Christ Jesus.



## OUT OF THE PAST.<sup>1</sup>

*"And Jesus said, So is the kingdom of God, as if a man should cast seed upon the earth ; and should sleep and rise night and day, and the seed should spring up and grow, he knoweth not how."*

*(Mark iv. 26, 27.)*

THE kingdom of God, then, is a growth. It begins with a seed ; it goes on to the harvest. In this growth are three necessary elements : first, the beginning, the point of departure ; second, a goal, a termination to which the progress is directed ; and, third, the pathway between the beginning and the goal, leading from the one to the other. This is the law of progress in all things—a *terminus a quo*, a *terminus ad quem*, and a pathway between the two. You cannot have progress, regular, systematic, symmetrical, without these three. You may break the line of juncture between the past and the future ; then you break the progress and must begin it over again. You may cut down the tree, and from the root there may start a fresh tree, but it is a new one. He who remains in the present, anchored to it, does not progress. He who cuts himself apart from the present does not know progress. He only understands the law of progress who begins with the present, utilizing the past, and proceeds out of that past and present toward the proposed future.

Next summer, on the seashore, you may find a sea-anemone clinging to the rock. I am told that even a sea-anemone does sometimes separate himself from the rock and

<sup>1</sup> Sermon preached in Appleton Chapel, Harvard College, Sunday evening, March 26, 1899.

start off on a voyage of exploration ; but as I have seen them they stand glued to the rock and take the food which chance sends to them. There is no progress in such a creature. You may watch by a pool next summer the little "skippers" on the water ; you go there at nine o'clock in the morning and they are skipping back and forth ; you go there in the afternoon at four o'clock and they are still skipping back and forth. They have motion, but no progress. The sea-anemone has neither motion nor progress. Movement is not progress.

In national history this is abundantly illustrated. Spain was anchored to the past ; she was bound by her own traditions ; she knew no progress. If you will read Borrow's "Bible in Spain," you will get a pretty good picture of the hotels, the methods of transit, and the customs of to-day. Spain had nineteenth-century guns and sixteenth-century men behind them ; we know what came. On the other hand, France broke with her past, cut sharply asunder from it. She brought together a convention of men, who were, on the whole, patriotic and prophetic and desired well for their country ; but they sundered her from all the traditions of the past, and it was many years before she could begin again a new course of progress. Great Britain has held to her traditions, but not been tied by them. She has made her future grow out of her past, and has kept the connection between the past and the future ; and the history of Great Britain has been a history of continuous and, on the whole, of almost unbroken progress.

This is the simple truth I want to put before you this evening, with some illustrations and applications.

America has turned a page in her National history. What shall she write on the new page ? She may, on the one hand, say nothing which has not been written in the past. She may bind herself by traditions of the past ; she

may try to be in the future exactly what she was in the past ; she may try to make a sea-anemone of herself—and she will not succeed. On the other hand, she may break asunder from that past entirely. She may say, "Thus far we have grown rich and strong and prosperous by principles of liberty, and self-government, and now we will take a new track and see what we can do by principles of imperialism and despotism." Neither the one nor the other course will give her progress. We are not to be bound by the traditions of the past. Traditions are not manacles to bind us, but are harness, for us to use in the forward movement. There is no more reason why the counsels which were appropriate in the beginning of the nineteenth century should bind us in the beginning of the twentieth than why the creeds that were the best thought of the seventeenth century should bind us in the nineteenth. We must do our own thinking, and guide our own ship by our own wisdom. But we must not break away from the past, and we must learn how to develop the future out of the past.

And the Nation has a right, young men, to look to a great university like this, and to the young men who are coming forth from this university, to guide in the progress of the future. It has a right to look to you to tell the Nation what shall be in the larger life that lies before it. The country needs leaders. It needs them sadly. It is glad to welcome them—so glad that it takes them, not infrequently, without asking whence they have come or whither they lead. It is right for us to expect that you will be prepared to take your share in leading the Nation forth to a greater future, without breaking the continuity of its history or abandoning the principles which have made it great.

This is true in the realm of industry. There are men who seem to imagine that the present industrial system has always existed, that the so-called capitalistic or wages

system has come down to us from the days of the Garden of Eden. It is just about one century old. There are other men who would wipe off the slate all that the experience of the past has taught us, and create a new social order ; and generally the man who wants to build the State afresh and create a new industrial order is the man who cannot take care of his own wife and children. What we need, and what we have a right to ask, of a great university and of its young men, is to show us how neither to be bound by the traditions of the past in the realm of industry nor to break away from them. "In every to-day walks a to-morrow."

We have a right to look to you, young men, to tell us what is the to-morrow that walks in to-day. Not to create a to-morrow out of your own imaginings, nor to insist that we shall always live in to-day ; but to find the to-morrow that is in to-day, and to teach us how to find it for ourselves. Whether you are preachers in the pulpit or administrators in law or conductors of business, it is yours to show, not how we can maintain the past unbroken, not how we can break from the past to enter into an ideal that you have invented for us, but how out of that past we can develop a noble future. And as out of slavery feudalism, and as out of feudalism the wages system, so out of the wages system the larger industrial liberty that lies before us must be developed.

This is true in the realm of ecclesiasticism. Did the apostolic Church have bishops? If so that does not require us to have them. Did the apostolic Church not have bishops? That is no reason why we should not have them. The methods of administering the Church in a province of the ancient Roman Empire may not be the best methods of administering the Church in this nineteenth century and in this great republic. We are to find the best method of Church administration that we can find. Did the apostolic Church baptize men by immersion? I rather



think so ; but it does not follow that in a country of blizzards we must always baptize people by immersion. The method of administering a rite that was good for a tropical country, and with garments easily laid aside, may not be the best in our time. And yet, if we are not bound by the past, neither are we to discard it, to throw overboard all rites and ceremonies, all the experience which the Church has garnered in the past, and say, "Go to! we will create a new order and a new rite." We are to learn how, out of the past, to evolve an instrumentation useful for to-day.

So in theology. I meet men who want to wipe off from the page of history all the creeds that ever were constructed. They want to abolish the Westminster Confession, and the Thirty-nine Articles, and the Heidelberg Catechism, and the Creed of Pius IX., and the Nicene Creed, and the Apostles' Creed and begin again. If I could think that for nineteen centuries thoughtful, earnest, devout men had been wrestling with the great problems of human life, wondering who God is and how He rules this world, and what we are and what we are here for and what lies in the future, and that in all these centuries they had found out nothing, I should give it up and be an agnostic. The creeds of the future must grow out of the creeds of the past. But a creed is not a rock to which your ship is anchored, while it swings back and forth in the tide and the barnacles gather on its bottom. The creed is a seed planted and out of that is to grow a nobler and a better creed. No new theology is worth having which cuts asunder from the past. And no theology is worth the having which remains identical with the creeds of the past. The theology that is not a growing theology is a dead theology. Life grows. And so, as I speak to some theological students here and to some who will be such, this is my word to them : Study the creeds of the past in order that you may find out from the thinking of

the past how to think better yourself for the present and for the future.

But these are illustrations ; and I have come here, with these brief illustrations, to lay emphasis on the practical and personal side of my theme. Let us then imagine one and another from this congregation coming up before me and speaking of his experience and letting me talk with him before this great congregation as I might talk with him at Wadsworth House. One young man, then, comes saying, "I was brought up in an orthodox circle. My mother was a devout believer. I learned from her the Christian creed and the Christian Bible ; I learned to pray ; I had no doubts. I began my studies, and soon came to the conclusion that the world was not made in six days. Presently I discovered that man had been more than six thousand years on the earth. Then I reached the conclusion that he had come from a lower order of animals. Then I discovered that language was not broken up at the Tower of Babel. I found reason to doubt one after another of the so-called miracles of the Bible, until at last my faith is all gone. I do not know what I believe, or whether I believe anything. I do not know what I believe about the Bible, about Christ, about myself. I do not even know whether I am immortal, or whether there is a God or not. O that I could go back to the simple faith of my childhood ! but I cannot."

That is very true. You certainly cannot. You must begin your progress from your present position. You cannot undo, if you would, the processes of growth, whether they are good or evil. It is vain to sing, "I would I were a boy again ;" you are not going to be a boy again ; you are a man, and must take life as you have come to it, and out of your present condition evolve your future. You sigh for the simple faith of your mother ; it was a beautiful

faith, and it sustained her in her simple life. But it would not sustain you in your life, and it is no discredit to her to say that it would not enable her to meet the skepticism that you have to meet. You must have another faith than hers. The unshaken faith of childhood is gone forever; you must have shaken faith or none at all. Pardon a word of autobiography. I remember my own college days, when I became skeptical. I doubted every article of the Christian creed, save only two. I think I never doubted my own immortality, or the existence of a good God; but everything else was doubtful. I am not sorry. All the faith I have to-day I won by wrestling, and I am glad of it. There are doubtless those in this congregation who cannot understand a skeptical mind; and I would not plunge them into skepticism. There are others who can hardly understand a mind that is not skeptical; I would not give them "a simple faith," as they call it, if I could. Take your position where you are. Start with the equipment which life has already given you. There are birds that sing in the sunshine while blossoms are fragrant and the skies are blue, and they are beautiful. And there are eagles that fly out from their eyries among the rocks and crags and breast the storm, and rejoice to breast it, while the rain beats pitilessly upon them, and the wind howls about them; and they also are beautiful, and God has place for both kinds. Do not be afraid of your doubts. They are your friends. The highway to earnest belief is earnest doubting. A question-mark is simply evidence that a man is beginning to think. Take, then, the doubts which education has given you, and face them. Seek to resolve them. The only skepticism that the pulpit has a right to condemn is the skepticism of Pilate, who says, with a shrug of his shoulders, "What is truth?" and goes out without waiting for an answer. If you wish to know the truth, dare to

inquire into everything. For there is no truth, however bitter, that is not better than any delusion, however sweet. If you are not immortal, it is better for you to know it than to think you are. If there is no God, it is better that you should know it than to think there is one. "Prove all things," says the Apostle. Start, then, out of your past, with the equipment of your present; be not abashed nor ashamed to look at that past; and out of it and out of the present seek for your future.

But there comes another and says, "My case is worse. I have not merely come to doubt; I have come to lose the power of believing." There is a pathetic passage in the life of Darwin, in which he says—I am quoting from memory only—"I once loved music, I once loved Shakespeare. Now I care not for music, and reading Shakespeare is dull and drear to me. I am afraid I have atrophied my faculties by disuse. If I could live my life over again, I would not concentrate my thought quite so much on physical science." So this man who comes before me says, "I have atrophied my faculties." More than one man has written to me saying, "I was a prosperous business man; I had my wife and children, my life was tranquil, I was satisfied. Now death has suddenly taken away my wife. Will you tell me of some book, or send me some article, or write me some letter that will prove to me the immortality of the soul?" He might as well ask me to prove color to a man who has lost his eyes, or music to one who had lost the power of hearing. When a man comes to me and says, "You say you know you are immortal—tell me how I can know it. You say you see God and speak to Him, and that He speaks to you. But I have no such experience; tell me how to get it," I must say, "No, I cannot. You have lost the power. Begin where you are. Evolve your future, not out of my past, but out of your



past. Are you blind? It is pitiful to be blind, but some great men have been blind. Did you never read of the blind bard Homer, or the blind singer Milton? Have you never seen a blind man on the street, tapping his stick on the sidewalk or led by a little dog, and yet with sunshine on his face? If you have no vision, walk as a blind man. There are other blind men; teach them how to walk!"

You do not know if you are immortal? My friend, there is something a great deal more important. It is this : living as a man lives who deserves to be immortal. It is a great deal better not to be immortal and to have a soul that is worth immortality, than to be immortal and to have a soul that does not deserve immortality. What could one think of worse than this, to have a soul that ought to die and could not? Live the immortal life now and here, and feel your way if you cannot see. If you do not know whether there is a God, what does that mean? You know there is a Power at the heart of the universe, but you are not sure that it is wise and good and righteous. Perhaps the world, after all, is governed by chance, as the dice happen to fall. Or perhaps there is evil at the heart of things, and wickedness will triumph in the end. What of it? Live as though there were a good God! What do you worship? If you worship Success, I have nothing more to say to you. But if you worship Goodness, worship it whether it is at the heart of the universe or not. What would you have? Suppose at the end of time the great drama shall end as the drama ended when Christ hung on the cross? Suppose at the end of time blackness falls, and the universe quakes at the very heart, and God Almighty hangs dying, and the devil is triumphant? Would you not rather be crucified with Christ than be crowned with Caiaphas triumphant? Live as though there were a good God, and worship good-

ness whether it be weak or strong. Take your present, with your blindness and its atrophy, and live as though there were goodness. And if there be no other good one, be good yourself.

But my third friend is in worse condition than either. He comes to me and says, "It is not mere doubt, it is not mere disbelief, it is not mere incapacity to see visions and dream dreams, that troubles me. I have thrown my life away. I have done the things I ought not to have done ; I have left undone the things I ought to have done, and there is no health in me. My opportunities I have squandered, my body I have vitiated, my mind I have degraded, my imagination I have filled with owls and bats. I have entangled myself with evil habits, with evil companions. Oh, would God I could go back again ! Would God I could get rid of these vile imaginings, this blood-poisoning that is in my veins ! Would God I could make a new start in life ! But I cannot." No, that is true, you cannot. I know we ministers sometimes talk as if you could—because we ministers can teach only a little fragment of truth at a time. But you cannot go back. The angel with the flaming sword stands at the gate of Eden, and he who has gone out from innocence never can return to innocence again, never ! The song the redeemed sing in heaven is not the song of Eden ; it is a new "song." Out of the experience of your own folly, your own failure, and your own sin, with all that past behind you, you must move forward to your future. And you can. Paul never could have written the Epistle to the Galatians if he had not been a proud, haughty, persecuting Pharisee. Saint Augustine never could have written the Confessions if he had not been first the roué Augustine. Luther never could have pinned the theses on the door of the church at Wittenberg if he had not been a superstitious monk. John B. Gough never could have been the mission-

ary to two continents in the cause of temperance, and swayed men's hearts as he did sway them, if he had not lain drunken in the gutter and fought delirium tremens. What is a man to do when he has thrown away his life, when he has poison in his veins, when all the past influences and all the companions of the present enmesh him? Three things. First, repent of the sin, turn away from it, abandon it, say, "I will have no more to do with it." Second, repair the evil so far as it can be repaired. Third, take the experience of the past, and make it minister to the wisdom and the grace—aye, and I dare to say the glory—of the future.

"In every to-day walks a to-morrow." If you have made great achievements, if you have done splendid work, if you stand high in other people's esteem, and especially in your own, do not stop to write bulletins of victory to yourself or others. The only reward worth the having for having done good work yesterday is a chance to do a better work to-morrow. The only reward for having reached a certain milestone in life's journey is the chance to do a better day's journey the next day. You remember Grant's message to Sheridan when he got the word of Sheridan's victory? "Push things." On the other hand, if you have failed, if through your own fault and your own folly, or the fault and the folly of others, you have seemed to lose your chance, if you have lost the simple faith of your childhood, if you have atrophied your faculties, even if you have poisoned your blood, begin where you are to-day, and out of the treasured experience of the past, with all its good and also with all its evil, set your face forward toward a nobler and a more splendid future.

And never say you are too old. You do not say it now, perhaps; but by and by, when the hair grows gray and the eyes grow dim and the grim despair comes to curse the old

age, you will say, "It is too late for me." Never too late! Never too old! How old are you—thirty, fifty, eighty? What is that in immortality? We are but children. When I hear a man saying it is too late, it seems to me as when two little children are playing in a nursery, and the one who has dropped his doll and broken it and seen the sawdust run out says, "Life is not worth living." You have eternity before you. Begin, not from an imaginary past, to which you can never go back; not from an imaginary future which you have not reached. Begin from the present, with all its treasury of good—aye, and with all its treasury of evil. And, keeping the pathway unbroken from the past to the future, lead on to life, to larger life, and yet larger life, answering the calling of Him whose call is ever upward, upward.



## UNCONSCIOUS FOLLOWING OF CHRIST.

*"He that receiveth you receiveth me, and he that receiveth me receiveth him that sent me. He that receiveth a prophet in the name of a prophet shall receive a prophet's reward; and he that receiveth a righteous man in the name of a righteous man shall receive a righteous man's reward. And whosoever shall give to drink unto one of these little ones a cup of cold water only, in the name of a disciple, verily I say unto you, he shall in no wise lose his reward."*

(Matthew x. 40-42.)

I WISH first to interpret this text and next to apply it.

Jesus Christ had but little time to do the work which He had to do on the earth. He wished, before He left Galilee, to have the message of the Gospel delivered throughout Galilee. It was not then, as it is now, a comparatively deserted region; it was wealthy and populous. It is said that there were five cities of considerable size along thirteen miles of coast on the Galilean Sea. It was impossible that He should personally minister to all this great population; so He called the twelve disciples about Him and gave them their message and their mission. He took the great cities; He sent them into the towns and villages. It was at the close of the commission which He gave them that these words were uttered. He said to them, practically: I am not able to go to all these people; but you can go in My name, you can carry My message, you can tell My Gospel, and whoever receiveth you will receive Me.

This is still true. Christ is present; and though there are many to whom the intangible and invisible presence is

unreal, there are many to whom He comes, as it were, in vision. Still He sends his messengers and missionaries; men who have received his Gospel into their hearts, men who have had some vision of Him, or got from others some vision of a vision of Him; still He says to men, He that receives My messenger, My disciple, My gospeler, the one who is doing My mission, receives Me.

In some respects it would have been easier to receive the Christ than the Twelve—the Christ whose face was now awful and now luminous, now so full of a strange light that men shrank back from Him and fell to the ground, and now so full of an equally strange love that little children reached out their hands to come to Him and to be embraced by Him. To listen to this man, who spake as no other man spake, no wonder that crowds thronged; but it was not so easy to give attention to the crude, raw Peter or the hesitating, doubtful Thomas, or even the fiery and loud John. “To receive you,” He says, “is to receive Me;” and then He added, “To receive Me is to receive Him that sent Me.” I have come, He tells us elsewhere, not of Myself; I speak not My own words; I am the bearer of a divine message and a divine life.

The world could not understand God, and cannot now. He is too large, too pure Spirit (if you will), too transcending all our apprehension. How can the finite comprehend the infinite? Only can we understand so much of Him as we ourselves are: His knowledge, by seeing a little way and understanding that there is an infinite knowledge running far beyond; His love, by seeing a little way and knowing that there is an infinite love far beyond. So the Infinite and the Eternal comes into life, or sends into life (I care not how you put it), one who bears the divine life in a human experience, and manifests on the earth what Dr. van Dyke has called the human life of God; and what

Christ says is this: He who sees not God, but sees this human life of God; he who does not see the Infinite, but sees this finite manifestation of the Infinite; he who cannot understand a Universal Love, but can comprehend love when it manifests itself on a little sphere and in a narrow life; he to whom the sorrows of life and the troubles of life are too great a problem, and who halts at it and yet can understand the splendid self-sacrifice manifested in this one single episode in human history—he, receiving this human life, receiving this self-sacrifice, receiving this gentleness, this heroism, this courage, and bowing before it, receives God, bows before God, reverences God. If you cannot receive the Infinite, receive the finite manifestation of the Infinite. Throw open your shutters, and you take in the sun because you take in the rays that come from the sun. Open your petals, Flower, and what comes to you? The rain-drops. You receive the cloud because you receive the messengers from the cloud. To receive the missioner of Christ is to receive Christ; to receive Christ is to receive the God who manifests Himself in human guise.

These missioners of Christ are of two kinds: men of thought and men of action. The men of thought are the prophets. They see the divine. They see the divine in the human; they interpret it by passionate utterance, by trope and figure; they try to show to others what they themselves have seen. Not all men are prophets; not all go up the mountain top and talk with God face to face. Only three of the disciples stand in the top of the Mount and see him transfigured before them in glory; then they come down and tell the others. But he that receives a prophet in the name of a prophet has the reward of a prophet. There is only one Shakespeare, but the pleasure which a reader gets in reading Shakespeare is the same in kind as the pleasure which Shakespeare experienced in

writing the play. There is only one Beethoven, but the pleasure which the interpreter of Beethoven has in interpreting him and which the great audience has in receiving that interpretation is the same in kind as the pleasure of Beethoven in composing and creating. He that receives a musician in the name of a musician has a musician's reward. He that receives a poet in the name of a poet has a poet's reward. He that receives a prophet in the name of a prophet has a prophet's reward.

Other followers and interpreters of Christ are the men of action. They have not seen visions, and they cannot put what they have seen into words, but they are stirred to deeds, and they fulfil their life by doing, not by seeing. Sometimes they have seen also ; sometimes they interpret also. A prophet may be a man of action, and the man of action may be a prophet, but it is not necessary to be both, and few men are ; and he that receives a righteous man in the name of a righteous man receives a righteous man's reward. He who sees the hero and follows after him, and tries to do within his own limited sphere the heroic action which a greater hero does, has a hero's reward. There is one great monument to General Grant, but every town and village in the country has a Soldiers' Monument to the privates who followed General Grant and fought the battles cheered by his example and inspired by their officers. This is the outward reward, the meed of praise. We all recognize it and we all give it, and so does God. But the higher reward was also theirs : the reward of doing brave deeds, the reward of heroic action, the reward of splendid service. This belongs to generals and major-generals, brigadier-generals and colonels ; but it belongs also to the private and to the drummer-boy. He who follows the hero and does in his own sphere and place the heroic action has in the service the reward of service, and has in the grateful



recognition of the nation the reward of praise. He may not be able to do much, but he can at least give a cup of cold water; and it makes no difference whether the deed be great or little, for greatness is in the spirit in which the deed is done and not in the thing which is accomplished. The stoker who stays down in the bottom of the ship keeping the fires alive, the gunner who stands upon the deck aiming the cannon, the admiral who walks upon the bridge directing the fleet, all are serving a common end, all receive a common reward, because all possess a common patriotism and a common heroism. To receive the messenger of Christ is to receive Christ; to receive the human life of God manifested in Christ is to receive God; to receive this through the ministry of a prophet is to receive the reward of the man of visions; to receive it through the ministry of the man of action is to receive the reward of the man of heroism: and he will receive that reward and take that life and fulfil that end, though his deed be so simple a thing as the giving of a cup of cold water.

I turn next to apply this principle to our life of to-day.

There are some men to whom the divine, invisible, infinite Spirit is a reality: men whom I will call mystics; men who almost seem to need no interpreter; men who in times of absorption forget the outer world and see only the invisible and the interior; men who have known God, though they never have known Christ and never have known the Bible; men who not only have been brooded by Him, but have felt the Spirit, and have been inspired by Him and have known the inspiration. There are persons in every church and in every Christian community to whom the life of devotion is an easy life. It is easy for them to understand the revelation; God seems to them to be always disclosing Himself to them. It is easy for them to pray. They can scarcely understand how any one cannot talk

with God. These men, these women, receive God directly and immediately and personally. If you can so receive him, thank God, take the revelation, utter the prayer, live the life which the great Father nourishes. But the great mass of men seem not to have such power. Whether they had it once and have lost it, whether they have it now and do not cultivate it, are metaphysical questions I do not enter into. To themselves they seem not to have it. They must have some interpreter between themselves and God. It is safe to say that this is probably true of the great majority of the men, and of a very considerable number of the women, in this congregation; they need an interpreter between God and themselves. Men have sought for such an interpreter, and when they have not found him, they have imagined him; hence idols, priests, soothsayers, and seers; hence all varied intermediaries between God and man. This need of the human race for some human interpreter of God to man, God Himself has recognized, and He has put into the world the human life of God incarnate in one single human life.

Now, if you cannot find your way to God, if to you He seems afar off, if when you read the definition of Herbert Spencer, "an Infinite and Eternal Energy from which all things proceed," that means nothing to you, if when you read the definition of Matthew Arnold, "A power not ourselves that makes for righteousness," that means nothing to you, if you want some one you can comprehend, there is given to you the Christ. God says, You shall have what you want; here is a human life put on the earth revealing God, and enabling you to comprehend Him. I do not stop to discuss now what is the relation of this Christ to the Eternal Father; I do not know—others think they do; I do not care, humanly speaking; I am quite ready to leave that for the future; it is enough for me that there is one

who interprets the Eternal Father. If you cannot see the Father, see Him ; if you cannot worship the Father, worship Him ; if you cannot pray to the Father, pray to Him ; if you cannot understand the Father, try to understand Him. Paul came to Christ through belief in His divinity, and I think a great many men in the Christian Church think they cannot come to God through Christ unless they first believe in the divinity of Christ. But the twelve did not believe in the divinity of Christ before they came to Him ; they did not know anything about it ; they knew Him first as a rabbi, then as a prophet, then as a Messiah, and they did not come to any apprehension of what we call the divinity of Christ, certainly not to any large and adequate conception of it, until after His resurrection. Twelve came to God through the human life of Christ ; one came to God through the divine life of Christ.

We may come either way. If you have been taught that Christ is divine, if the vision of His divinity flashes upon you in a miraculous light, humbly accept it. If, however, there is no such revelation, if it seems impossible that there should be a divine manhood, if you cannot understand what was the divinity of Christ, if that is mystical and strange, take the man. Here He is. Splendid teaching, splendid work, splendid life, splendid sacrifice, growing more and more splendid as the years go on ; a larger and larger number following Him, reverencing Him, worshipping Him. He that receives the human Christ receives God whether he knows it or not.

But perhaps you cannot do that. This Christ is so far away—He lived eighteen centuries ago ; He lived in a different place ; a great deal of His teaching seems to you impracticable. “ Give to him that asketh you, and from him that borroweth turn not away ”—I cannot do that ; “ If one smite you on the one cheek, turn the other cheek also ”—I

cannot do that. He went on an itinerant ministry—I cannot do that. What then? You can receive His prophet. If He is so far away, if those eighteen centuries seem like a great gulf, if His teaching seems impracticable and hard to be understood, if you cannot apply it to the common affairs of life, if He seems to belong to another life and another world, learn of the men who have something of His spirit of sacrifice, something of His vision of God, something of His conception of duty, something of His ideal of life. If you cannot receive the Christ, receive the prophet. Take the Whittier, the Faber, the Phillips Brooks; take the preaching or the poetry or the personality; accept the man as an expression of the divine. Take him wherever you can find him. Take him in orthodox circles, or take him in heterodox circles. Take Spurgeon, take Matthew Arnold, take Robertson, take Renan, take anybody, whoever he is, who makes you see something higher, nobler, better in life than the life you are now living—any man, whoever he is, who has gotten direct from God or from the teachings of Jesus Christ a better conception, a higher conception, a more inspiring conception, than that which you possess, of noble living. He is the prophet of God. Receive the prophet as a prophet. That is what Paul means when he says, Quench not the spirit, despise not prophesyings. If you have any spiritual nature in you that responds to the inaudible voice and the unseen visions, do not extinguish it, and do not despise other men who have felt, seen, known. Why should you despise such witnesses? You believe that the world goes round the sun. Can you give the astronomical evidence of the fact? You take it on the testimony of witnesses. You believe that there are some islands called the Philippines, with which we are presently going to have some vital connection. Have you ever been there or ever seen them? You take the outward fact on the outward testi-



mony; why not take the inward fact on the inward testimony? If you never have known what it is to pray, there are men in whose words you trust and in whose inspired judgment you have confidence who do know what it is to pray.

But perhaps you cannot even hear the poet. You do not care for poetry. Browning and Tennyson and Faber and Watts, religious poetry and secular poetry, are all unmeaning to you. You are only a man of practical affairs; only a common, a prosaic man. You like sometimes to say that of yourself—I am just a practical man. Well, there is a word for you. There are men about you who are heroic; men who are honest and honorable, who are just and true, who are self-sacrificing and serviceable; men who are doing in their lives something of what Christ did in His. There is not one of us who does not know somewhere some man who seems to have in himself something worthy of reverence. When I was in Terre Haute years ago there was a man at the head of the Union Station at Indianapolis who was so kindly, so considerate, so careful, so thoughtful of others, that every man who knew him loved him and recognized him as a Christian man; and when railroad men who did not often go to church, even when they could, said to me, I do not believe in your churches, I do not believe in your ministers or in your Christianity, I said, Do you believe in Billy Jackson?—and they always did. There is not one of you who does not know a Billy Jackson; and if you cannot follow God because He is afar off, and you cannot follow the Christ because He is mystical, take the man who seems to be nobler, better, and diviner than yourself and follow him. He that receives a righteous man—in the name of Christ?—no, in the name of a righteous man; it is not even necessary that you should see Christ in him; it is not even necessary that you should recognize the divine in

the righteous man : see the nobler, better man than yourself, and follow him, and you will be following the one whom he is following.

Felix Adler has a theology which lacks almost everything that seems to me essential to a good system of theology, and he preaches a religion which seems to me to lack a great deal that is essential to the highest and best religion ; but under Felix Adler's ministration there are scores of men and women in New York who are trying unselfishly to do good to their fellow-men. Some of them are following righteous ideals, and some of them are following prophets ; and whether they know it or not, whether they are Jews or Christians, whether they are believers or agnostics, they are following Christ ; for whoever is doing good work in the world is doing God's work, and all God's work is good work. Do I say it makes no difference? It makes a great deal of difference. To go on trying to do righteous work just because it is righteous work, to go on doing righteous work with entire doubt as to whether the righteous work will ever come to anything or not, to go on living a righteous life without any faith in Christ as a leader or in God as a sovereign ruler, who will utilize and save my good work, and will destroy and utterly burn up my bad work—to do that seems to me very hard. I do not know that I should have conscience enough to try to follow a righteous life if I did not believe in a righteous God and a future life. It is a great deal easier to live the righteous life with faith in a righteous God and in an immortal future. But you can receive a righteous man in the name of a righteous man, and go no further, and still Christ—not I—*Christ* says to you, you shall have the righteous man's reward. You know what that is : the crown of righteousness laid up for every one that loveth His appearing. Not for every one who has already seen Him appear, but for every one who

longs for His appearing, loves it, and will welcome it when it comes.

But you really cannot do anything ! If you could only go out and do some service ; if you could only join a College Settlement ; if you could only be a martyr ; if you could only do some great thing ! You are a mother, and your children keep you busy ; you are a merchant, and your store keeps you busy ; your health is not very good, and your invalidism absorbs you. "He that giveth a cup of cold water"—there is the word for you. It is not the thing done, it is the spirit of the doer ; for do you not see there is only one thing in the world that is worth anything—that is character ? Not what is done, but the men who do it ; not the finger, but the heart that moves the finger ; not the achievement, but the spirit that stirs to the achievement. Therefore, he who has the character that wants to help on the cause of righteousness, the cause of goodness, the cause of purity and truth in the world, though the only thing he can do is to give a cup of cold water—he belongs in God's great band.

There were men who fought by the side of General Grant and received his commands, day by day, from him ; and there were other men who fought just as loyally who never set their eyes on him from the beginning of the campaign to the end, but they followed him. He gave his command to his major-generals, and the major-generals to the brigadier-generals, and the brigadier-generals to the colonels, and the colonels to the captains, and the captains to the sergeants, and at last the private got the order and obeyed it ; and he was obeying General Grant, although he never saw General Grant. If you cannot get your order direct from the commander-in-chief, take it from the sergeant—only obey it. We march through the world, this great procession, with many banners and with many kinds of music :

the shouting Methodist, the orderly Episcopalian, the serene and stable Presbyterian, the quiet and reticent Quaker, the individual sharpshooter who calls himself a Congregationalist; here they are, all of them—marching in one great procession. At the head I think I see the Christ who bears the Cross; and around Him are men like Him, who hear directly the word of God, and see directly the Father who has commissioned them; but he who far down the rank still trudges on, through dust and toil and sun and suffering, following righteousness, is following Christ. You young men and you young woman, aye, and you older men and women, who say, I cannot be a Christian because I do not understand God and I do not understand Christ, I do not understand prophecy and I do not understand mysticism, and religion all seems to me to be in the clouds—I am talking to you this morning, and I tell you that if you take the Church as your lawgiver you may have some excuse for thinking you cannot be a Christian, but if you take Christ you have none. If you cannot see God, look at Christ; if you cannot see Christ, listen to the prophet; if you cannot hear the prophet, follow the righteous man.



## PAUL'S GOSPEL FOR AMERICA.

*"But we speak the wisdom of God in a mystery, even the hidden wisdom, which God ordained before the world unto our glory."*

(1 Cor. ii. 7.)

CORINTH presented probably the hardest field that Paul ever labored in. It was a city given over to skepticism. The Sophists were scholastic theologians before theology was born. They devoted themselves to the discussion of minute points of abstract philosophy. They assumed that the knowledge of man was obtained through his senses; and they made perpetual and futile attempts to penetrate the mystery of life through the senses and the reason. The result of their endeavors was, according to an ancient story, fairly summed up by a conversation between two of these Sophists, one of whom said, "I have concluded that I know nothing;" and the other of whom replied, "I have concluded that I do not even know that!" This was the skepticism of Corinth. God, the future, the soul of man, the cause of natural and moral obligations, the reality of moral obligations—all unknown. And closely related to this, perhaps growing out of it, perhaps producing it, was a spirit of worldliness and sensuality. It was the most corrupt city of the most corrupt State in the most corrupt age of the world. Religion—that is, the heathen religion—had no relation to morality in Corinth, and the temples themselves were dedicated to the promotion of drunkenness and of vice. After Paul had planted a church, and come away,

this spirit of skepticism and this spirit of worldliness entered the church; and the church itself became divided into factions. One faction said, "We stand by the old religion, of which Christianity is only a new form;" they called themselves followers of Peter. The second said, "We are radicals; we have cut ourselves loose from the first; Christianity has nothing to do with the ancient religion;" they called themselves followers of Paul. The third said, "Christianity is a new theology; we must have a new philosophy to explain it;" they called themselves followers of Apollos. The fourth said, "We for ourselves have such an intimate relationship with Christ that we neither need tradition nor philosophy, old or new, to help us;" they called themselves followers of Christ. So there sprang up even then the traditionalists, the radicals, the scholastics, and the mystics; and the Church of Christ, facing the grossest form of skepticism and the grossest form of worldliness, faced it divided into contending factions who were fighting one another.

In some sense history does repeat itself; and though certainly it will be untrue to say that American life mirrors Corinthian life, it is not untrue to say that those features of Corinthian life are in a modified and ameliorated form reproduced in American life. We confront the same spirit of skepticism which declares that all that a man knows he learns through his senses and by what he can deduce from his senses. We know what we can see, and hear, and touch, and taste, and feel; and what we can conclude from what we can see, and hear, and touch, and taste, and feel: and all the rest is imagination. This is called sensationalism in philosophy; and this sensationalism in philosophy leads on to skepticism in theology; it leads on by inevitable and logical deduction to the conclusion that there is no certainty of God in the universe; and, for that matter, no

certainty of the soul in man. "I have searched the universe," says Lalande, "with my telescope; and I cannot find God!" And this also leads on to what is called utilitarianism in ethics. There is no instinctive and intuitive perception of virtue. There is no recognition of honesty and honor and truth for their own sake; but that is virtuous which produces the greatest amount of happiness for the greatest number of people. Happiness, the end of creation; the eye, the means of the acquisition of knowledge; and we not knowing who rules us and whose light is before us! And closely connected with this, growing out of it and reacting on and helping to produce it, is the spirit of luxury, effeminacy, vice. The simplicity of the colonial days is gone, and we cannot bring it back again. That simplicity of the colonial days was partly a product of the poverty of the colonial days; and it is doubtful whether any of us are saintly enough to desire both the poverty and simplicity. Both have gone. We have great aggregations of capital; we have men selling themselves to make money, and measuring themselves by the amount of money they make; we have young men coming to the cities and worshiping success; and we have men following the counsel, "Get on, honestly if you can; dishonestly if you must." Day before yesterday I heard three young men talking in a trolley-car—that was in New York, but, after all, New York is not unlike other cities in America—and one young man said to the other, "What business are you in?" The other answered, "I am in six businesses." And the other man said to him, "You must be making some money." The reply was, "Well, I am not complaining." It is a very simple little dialogue; but it was perfectly clear that those three men, then and there, on that Friday morning—it was not Sunday, in a church, then their words might have been different—but on that Friday

morning, they considered the question for them was, "How shall we make money?" And thus in our American life we are continually asking, "What is a man worth? How many thousands?"—measuring the man with a dollar-mark, as you would measure pork. And, growing out of it, this conception of value is the conception of happiness as the end of life. Pleasure! Pleasure! Pleasure! That is the end of life, according to this form of utilitarianism. So we find the same forces undermining the moral life of America that were undermining the moral life of Corinth.

And this spirit of skepticism, this spirit of worldliness, undermining the Church and creeping into it, brings with it sectarianism. You can take Paul's description of the parties in Corinth, and read it again, putting other men's names in it in the place of Paul, Apollos, Cephas, and Christ; and you will have a picture of the sectarian spirit of our own time: I am of Calvin; I am of Wesley; I am of Fox; and I am of Christ: for we have the Christians here also. It is said that there are in America over three hundred separate Protestant denominations; and, as if that were not enough, there are quite a goodly number of independent churches besides; while there are men who do not know about joining the Church, for they do not know which church to join! We are divided on questions of doctrine into Calvinists and Armenians; we are divided on questions of order into Presbyterians and Congregationalists and Episcopalians; we are divided on questions of ritual into Baptists and Pedo-Baptists; and, as if that were not enough, there are at least two or three Presbyterian divisions; there are two or three Methodist divisions; there are two Episcopalian divisions; and I do not know how many of Congregationalists. Thus you have here in America the same spirit of skepticism, the same spirit of worldliness, and the same spirit of sectarianism, which Paul confronted in Corinth.



Now, as far as I can within the limits of a single sermon, which ought to be briefer than I am afraid I am going to make this, this morning, I want to point out what was Paul's method of meeting skepticism, worldliness, and sectarianism, as he indicates it in his first letter to the Corinthians. He treats these all as symptoms of the same disease, and applies to them all the same remedy. With that characteristic radicalism which belonged to him, he says, in effect, "You skeptics, I concede all that you claim ; and you are wrong. You men of the world, I concede all that you claim ; and you are wrong. You sectarians, I concede nothing to you ; and you are wrong !" The skeptic says, "I can see ; I can hear ; I can touch ; I can taste ; I can feel ; and seeing, hearing, touching, tasting, feeling, that is believing. I know those things ; and from all those things by my reason I can reach certain conclusions. I know those things ; but all that lies beyond is the unknown." And Paul says, "Yes, you are right ; but it is written, Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man, the things which God hath prepared for them that love Him." Lalande says, "I have searched the heavens for God ; and I cannot find Him." Paul says, "You are right. You cannot find Him. Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard Him. The natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God : for they are foolishness unto him ; neither can he know them." You are wise to be an agnostic ; for all you know is derived from your eye and ear. You cannot know God ; you cannot know immortality ; you cannot know Christ ; you cannot know eternal things by the sense and by deductions from the senses. But we speak the wisdom of God in a mystery ; which things also we speak, not in the words which man's wisdom teacheth, but which the Holy Ghost teacheth." They are spiritually discerned. Paul starts with the affirmation that man is more than an animal,

and more than a sensible being ; he has in him more than that which the eye can see and the ear can hear ; he has a sixth sense ; he has in him a direct and immediate capacity for perceiving the invisible and the eternal. If a man shuts his eyes, he cannot see color ; if he shuts his ears, he cannot hear music. If he shuts this sixth sense, if he shuts out the spiritual nature, if he bars the doors against it, and will not use it, he is right to be an agnostic ; he ought to be. If he is seeking truth with the mere eye, the mere ear, and the mere reason deducing from the eye and ear, he cannot see God. But the greatest truths are not those we see through the eye, hear through the ear, or touch with the hand, or taste with the palate. You see these flowers—they are beautiful ; but why is it that one person sees beauty in a flower, and another person none ?

When Jenny Lind was in this country so many years ago, I heard her in the oratorio of "The Messiah." As I sat in my seat, there came and sat near me an old, weather-beaten sea-captain, who asked me to point her out to him as she came in. There was a chorus, one or two solos, I believe, and then Jenny Lind rose and sang "Come unto Me, all ye that labor and are heavy laden ;" and as she sang, it seemed to me that I could hear the voice of the Master singing down through the years ; and the hall was hushed and silent when she took her seat, with a silence more significant than any applause. Then I heard a harsh, grating sound at my side, and, turning about, saw that the poor old sea-captain was sound asleep, and snoring ! He had heard all that I heard ; he had seen all that I saw ; but why did he not hear what I heard ? why did he not catch what the audience caught ? Because there was no music in his soul. There must be music in the soul to respond to the music of the organ, of the choir, of the singer ; or there is no music. Eye hath not seen, ear hath not heard, and it

hath not entered into the heart of man to conceive, the music that God hath prepared for man. All our business rests on truths that are not proved, not demonstrated. We in our business trust one another; and we go on trusting one another, in spite of the defalcations and frauds here and there, now and then; we do it wisely, because we believe in what? Honesty. How long is honesty? How broad is honesty? What color is honesty? How does honesty taste? What do your senses show you about honesty? If a man says, "I do not believe in honesty," you do not argue with him; but you keep your hand on your pocketbook till you get out of his presence. Honesty lies in the very structure of man. He sees it, he knows it. Our homes are built on love. Oh, mother, why do you spend so much time over that crippled boy? The doctor tells you he cannot live a great while. Two or three years, and then he will be gone from you. You will get no money from him—and we are living for money in this world; you will get no pictures; you will get no books; nothing that your eye can see for it; and you will not even get a grown-up boy by and by to take care of you when you get old. He has a hopeless spinal complaint; he is going to die. But if you dare to say that to the mother, she would shoot you through with her fiery eyes, then look upon you with ineffable pity, as a man who does not know the love that transcends all things that eye sees, or ear hears, or reason concludes. This is Paul's method of meeting skepticism. He says to every man, "You are a spiritual being; you are one of God's children; you are of kin to the Almighty; you have eyes to see the things that cannot be seen; you have ears to hear the things that cannot be heard." How do I know that there is a God? How do you know that you have a mother? You have seen her! Oh, I beg your pardon; you never yet saw your mother. You have seen her face, her features, her eyes,

her form ; but that is not mother. If that be mother, then why, when the form lies prostrate and you press your lips on the lips that never before refused to answer that pressure, and look into the eyes that never before failed to look with answering love back into yours, why do you wring your hands and cry for "Mother !" if the form you see is mother? No, it is the loving heart, the spirit of ineffable and long-suffering tenderness, that is your mother. We who are Christians, having that same measure of Paul's faith, be it little or much, we know that there is a God, because we have seen Him, we have walked with Him, we have been upon the mountain and talked with Him ; we have been in sorrow and He has comforted us ; we have been in weakness and He has strengthened us ; we have been tempted and He has enabled us to conquer ; we have fallen into sin and He has lifted from us its heavy burden.

Are you immortal? you wonder. Well, so do I. I do not know. I know that part of you is mortal. And I see sometimes some men of whom I wonder whether there is anything about them that is not mortal. A Frenchman was discussing that question with a Christian. He argued at great length to prove that the soul is not immortal ; and the Christian friend replied, "Probably you are right ; probably you are not immortal ; but I am." This spring one of the trees said to itself, "Spring has come. The buds are come. The fruit is coming. I feel a stirring within myself. Spring is coming, bringing life, new life." And another tree which stood near, with dead branches and dead trunk and dead roots, dead from top to bottom, replied : "Nonsense ! I do not feel any such stirrings within me. I do not feel any such flowing of sap ; I do not feel any such intimation ; I feel no such suggestion of buds. Nonsense ! It is visionary ; there is no spring coming." And to the dead tree there is no spring coming



as it comes to the living tree, bringing renewed life. The remedy for skepticism is not by labored argument to deduce God from the phenomena of the universe. The remedy for skepticism is to awake the spiritual nature of man so that he may see the good that was before only hypothesis; that he may find certainty where before was only hope.

And this is the remedy for worldliness also. The worldly man says, "The world is mine." "Yes," Paul says, "it is all yours. All things are yours; whether Paul, or Apollos, or Cephas, or the world, or life, or death, or things present, or things to come, all are yours." And, as he has conceded everything that the agnostic claims, yet says the agnostic is wrong, so he concedes all that the man of the world claims, and yet says that the man of the world is wrong. All is yours, for ye are Christ's, and Christ's is God's.

Why is the world yours? It is the universal law that the lower is made to serve the higher; the inorganic world furnishes material out of which the organic is formed. Out of the juices and minerals of the earth the tree is framed and shaped; and out of the vegetable creation the animate is formed. The ox eats grass, and the grass becomes ox; the ox does not become grass. The grass serves the animal, as the inorganic served the organic. The animal serves man, is made to serve him, made to be underneath him and in subjection to him. So in man the lower serves the higher; and when any man makes the higher serve the lower, he turns creation, so far as he is concerned, upside down. In him the ox becomes grass, not grass ox. Now, that happens whenever a man says to himself, "I am in this world to make what I can out of it." What does that mean? It means, I, a spiritual being for whom things were created, I am going to take my reason, my vision, my capacity, my power, to make money. Men are not to make

money ; money is to make men. Folks are not for things ; things are for folks. Material things are for the service of man in his intellectual and in his spiritual state. It is no remedy for a man who is living for pleasure, living for accumulation, living for the things of this life, to say to him, "You must not do it quite so much ; you must put two dimes in the collection-plate instead of one ; or, You must drink one glass of beer instead of two ; you must not do this, you must not do that, you must not do the other." It does not make any difference what he does, so long as he is living upside down. We try to save ourselves from the worse evils of self-indulgence by drawing lines. We imagine that we can go on living for self—that is, using our higher nature to minister to our lower one, and yet be moral if we do not transcend certain lines. So the question comes up over and over again. I do not know how many times it has been written to me, as editor of *The Outlook*, "Where shall I draw the line?" It is drawn between courses of conduct : it is wrong to go to the theater, but right to go to the circus—especially if you have the children with you. Or, lines are drawn between individuals : it is right for a layman to go to the theater, but he does not want his minister to go ; it is right for a girl to dance, until she joins the Church ; then she must stop dancing. All these fictitious, false distinctions Paul sweeps away. The whole world is yours ; all teachers are yours ; all books are yours ; all literature is yours ; all the world and all its activities are yours ; all things present and future are yours ; but they are yours to use ; to use that by them you may minister to your own higher nature and the higher nature of men and women round about you.

A boy goes into his father's artist studio, takes some paints, and begins to splash carelessly on the canvas. If the father is foolish, he takes the pigments from the boy,

boxes his ears, and says, "Go away!" If he has wisdom as a father, he will say, "My son, I am glad to see you trying to paint. I will show you how." And he takes fresh pigment, and gets a little piece of canvas, and draws the outline of a man, and shows the boy how to outline the face and fill it in with white color, and paint the jacket blue, and the pantaloons red; and suddenly the boy has blossomed into the beginning of an artist. So all things in the studio of life are yours; but you are to use them, not to splash the canvas, but to paint. So in that wonderfully poetic description of creation, in the first chapter of Genesis, what is the teaching? I have made this world for you to live in: take it; use it; have dominion over it. In that wonderful biography of Christ, what is the teaching? John the Baptist came and said, "This is a bad world; it is an immoral world; it is a wicked world; I will keep out of the world. People grow effeminate by the dress they wear; I will wear a rough garment. People grow gluttonous by the food they eat; I will eat nothing but locusts and wild honey." Christ comes and begins His ministry by changing water into wine for the guests at the wedding; and ends His life drinking wine at the Last Supper; and so lived during all the period of His earthly ministry, that from that beginning to that end, while He never in any instance declined a single social invitation, He yet gave cause for offense in none. He lived with all men, joining in their social pleasures, joining in their life, and bringing them to Him by it all, and yet so doing it always that no man could call Him a winebibber or a glutton without the falsity of the accusation being at once manifest; so living that every man that sees Him, and every man that has read the story since, knows that while He was subjected to all the influences with which men struggle in this life, He always served the Master's will—a service which meant to

Him self-sacrifice. The remedy for worldliness is not drawing of lines; it is not prohibition of any kind. It is dedication. It is a shame for a man to be a millionaire in possessions if he is not also a millionaire in beneficence. The only man whom Christ called a fool was the man who thought that property was only good to be hoarded; did not know that it was to be used!

Paul declares further that the cause of sectarianism in the Church is that same thing which has caused worldliness and skepticism. "I, brethren, could not speak unto you as unto spiritual, but as unto carnal"—"for ye are yet carnal; for whereas there is among you envying, and strife, and divisions, are ye not carnal, and walk as men?" You are fleshly men, he says. And it is because you are fleshly men that you are divided up as you are. One says, I am of Paul; and another, I am of Apollos; and I, of Cephas; and I, of Christ. It ought to add something to our humility, this declaration of the Apostle, if we really believe it, that the division of the Christian Church to-day into Calvinists and Arminians, into Presbyterians and Episcopalians and Congregationalists, into Baptists and Pedo-Baptists, has for its root the same evil poison that produces sensuality and worldliness, that produces skepticism and unbelief. But that is Paul's declaration; and his remedy is this: Go back to your message; and in the fifteenth chapter of First Corinthians he tells us that message very clearly.

Moreover, brethren, I declare unto you the gospel which I preached unto you, which also ye have received, and wherein ye stand. . . . For I delivered unto you first of all that which I also received, how that Christ died for our sins according to the scriptures; and that He was buried, and that He rose again the third day according to the scriptures.



There is a spiritual world which the eye hath not seen, and the ear hath not heard, and it hath not entered into the heart of man to conceive ; and out of that spiritual world, out of that invisible world all round about us, there came one bearing the shape and form of the Son of man, bearing in Himself the Spirit of the Son of God ; and He has come and He has lived among men that men might see, and might feel the divine manifestation. Our eyes have seen Him, says John ; and our hands have handled Him. He has lived this life that we might understand what spiritual life means. We have had the swift moving vision of it ; then it has gone out. Men have thought that the spiritual has died altogether ; then the Christ has come back again ; and with apparition after apparition, disclosure after disclosure, He has hammered His way into the hearts of the skeptical, unbelieving disciples till they have come to the conclusion that they were nearer to the spirit world than ever they were before. He appears before their eyes ; He meets them at the supper-table ; He enters into their praying-meeting ; He joins with them where they are fishing ; He tells them, " Lo ! I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world." Always walking with us unseen, as with the disciples on the road to Emmaus. Ever since that day of resurrection, what is it that has been or should have been the message of the Church ? Not a creed, not a symbol or system, not any such thing as that ; but this : we know that the spirit world is real ; we know that He that was born of a virgin has come and lived among men ; we have seen Him ; we know the spirit world is real ; because death cannot conquer Him ; He has risen from the dead, and come again and showed Himself to us. It is only when the Church does not know, only when the Church forgets its message, only when it thinks its message is philosophy, or a symbol, that it quarrels over these

little things. Did you ever know a revival of religion and an ecclesiastical trial to go on in a church at the same time? Spiritual life—when the Church gets that; when it sees its Christ; when it knows Him; when it walks with Him; when it lives with Him; even though it still maintains its creed, its forms and ceremonies, and its order and organization, still it will not be known by these, nor care for these; but only by and for that one transcendent message, that the Son of God has lived, and suffered, and died, and risen again, that we might live the life that He lived, and enter into eternal life with Him.

Sometimes we wish, all of us, I think, that our poor halting faith might have some support from sense. If this morning, as I talk to you, our faith could only have an instant, visible representation; if we could see Christ here; if, looking up, we could see the friends who have gone before all gathered here; if I could see my father, and my mother, and my brothers, and my friends watching me to see what sort of a message I would give; if you who have come here, some of you, with the habiliments of mourning, with woe in your heart, might see the friend at your side, wondering that you are not wearing white in thankfulness at his glorification; if only for this little while these earthly things could be swept away, if from this dream that we are living we could awake to the divine and splendid reality, we should not go back to quarrel with our brothers of like family because they phrase their belief differently, and we should never go back to doubt again the splendid, divine reality of the spiritual life. Why do we wait for our heaven? Why? "Ye are come unto Mount Sion, unto the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem, and to an innumerable company of angels, to the general assembly and church of the firstborn, which are written in heaven, and to God the Judge of all, and to the spirits of just men

made perfect, and to Jesus the mediator of the new covenant." "Ye are come:" not by and by in some great judgment day shall we come, not by and by when God mercifully strips off from us this covering of our flesh, and our spirit is emancipated; now! now! ye have come. The remedy for skepticism, and the remedy for sensuality and effeminacy and luxury, and the remedy for sectarian divisions and strife in the Church of Jesus Christ, is all one. It is the spiritual vision that knows and sees God, Christ, and immortality, and lives with Him in the eternal life, here and now!

## A CONFESSION OF FAITH.\*

*Whom therefore without knowing him, ye worship, him declare I unto you.*  
(Acts xvii. 23.)

THIS is the Gospel in epitome; this the message of the Christian minister; to declare to men who do reverence God without knowing Him, the God whom they reverence.

Twelve years ago next month (I might almost say next week) the former pastor of this church died. In the fall following I came, first to be preacher and then to be pastor. For eleven and a half years I have been your minister. To-day I am your minister for the last religious service; and it seemed to me appropriate to take this occasion to sum up in a single discourse the message which I have tried to give to you, and which I hope to continue to give as long as I live. For I wish to turn your thoughts away from me and from yourselves and from the occasion to the message of the Gospel and to Him who is the center of that message.

\* The Rev. Lyman Abbott, after eleven years of service, resigned the pastorate of Plymouth Church, Brooklyn, on Sunday, November 27, 1898; for letter of resignation see The Outlook for December 3, 1898. The resignation was made to take effect at such time as might meet the convenience of the church. Dr. N. D. Hillis was called to the pastorate January 17, 1899, accepted the call, and was expected to enter upon its duties some time in March. Dr. Abbott, upon conference with the Committee of the Church, arranged to bring his pastorate to a close on February 26, and this sermon was preached on this occasion and was followed by the communion service.



I have assumed, through these years, that you and I belong to one family; not because we are of one church, or of one creed, or of one country, or even of one race, but because we are of one Father. I have assumed that you and I are children of God; not that we can by some religious service become children of God, but that we are the children of God. Perhaps it would be more accurate to say that we are becoming children of God, that we are emerging from the animal into the divine and spiritual condition, and that, though relics of the past still cling about us and make us of the earth earthy, there is in every one of us a true kinship with the ever-living Father. Some of us know Him and are living at home with Him and are happy in our lives; some of us sometimes live at home with Him and sometimes do not, sometimes are happy in our lives and sometimes are not; some of us are conscious that we have strayed away from Him, but we have turned our face toward Him again and are traveling homeward, doubting whether He will receive us or not, and harassing our hearts with our doubts and questionings; and some of us do not know Him at all, and have no knowledge of Him, and act as though we were orphans. But whether we know Him or not, whether we love Him or not, whether we are conscious of Him or not, we *are* His children—every one of us; and within every one of us there is some sort of witness to our kinship with Him; and in my speaking to you I have appealed to this witness within yourselves of your kinship with God. Paul does indeed say, in that passage which we have read this morning, that once we were dead in trespasses and sins. But I have not tried to speak to those who are dead, for it is not in the power of a prophet's voice to call dead men to life again. I have thought of those of you who least responded to spiritual truth, not as dead, but as asleep, with the divine life in you dormant,

and I have tried to waken it. And, for this purpose, I have tried first of all to know myself the God whom I wanted to make others know, that He might be in me and speak through me.

The whole world seems to me to be seeking after God, and God seeking after the whole world. God seeking after men? Cannot He do everything? No! A mother cannot reveal astronomy to a babe four years old. God can reveal Himself to us only so far as there is in us capacity to receive the revelation; and it seems to me that God is trying all methods, all plans, that He may reach the hearts of men and awaken them, and cause them to see that God is in His world, and that God is their friend. The question is sometimes asked, Are we to say that man is seeking God, or God is seeking man? Will you say that the sprouting seed is seeking the sun, or the sun is seeking the seed? They are coming toward each other. Will you say that the child loves the mother, or the mother loves the child? The love of the mother has wrought love in the child. Man is seeking God, because God is seeking man. All religion seems to me to be just this: God seeking men, men seeking God; God using the means that men understand, speaking their vernacular, coming to them through such avenues as they open to Him, appealing to them through their reason, their affections, their tastes, their sensuous nature, in whatever way He can, coming to them through their priests, through their prophets, through men like-minded with themselves, coming to them often through methods that seem to us slow and unspiritual and inadequate. All religions are groping after Him, trying to find Him—and not all religions only, but all life. The young man says, I will make a fortune; success is what I will pursue. He is pursuing God and does not know it, for he never will find success until he finds it in God. The mer-

chant may think that he is in life to accumulate ; he is not ; he is here to distribute, and to distribute in the very process of accumulation. The manufacturer is finding his way to God ; for he also is creating, and by his process of creating is learning something of the Creator. The artist is searching for beauty ; and beauty is God, and God is beauty. The philosopher is looking for truth, and truth is God and God is truth. The youth says, I am satisfied, I have found love ; the mother says, At last I am satisfied, I have found love. And yet the wife and the babe are themselves but teaching us what is the meaning of love : and love is God and God is love.

And so these Sunday mornings I have talked to you, as one brother talks to other brethren, knowing God a little, and believing that you want to know God, and trying to tell you a little about Him, and trying to waken a little of the experience of God in your own hearts. This is always the message, it seems to me, of the prophet. And if He comes to the man whose life is in accumulation or in ambition, this is still His message : Why do you spend your money for that which satisfieth not ? Why do you not see that all experiences lead you on and up to God ?—that God is Creator, and manufacturing teaches you of Him ; that God is Benefactor, and distribution teaches you of Him ; that God is Teacher, and philosophy teaches you of Him ; that God is Father, and the home teaches you of Him ; that God is Lover, and love teaches you of Him ; that God is the Comforter, and sorrow teaches you of Him ; that God is Redeemer, and sin and repentance teach you of Him ; that all life-experiences are but ministers that lead you toward Him.

If this were all, I might be a minister, but I should not be a Christian minister. But I believe that God has found man, and man has found God, and that in the one incom-

parable historical revelation God and man have come together, and God has filled the one human life full of Himself, and in the Christ I see the God, and in the Christ I see the man. I have not been able, and I do not wish to be able, to furnish a philosophical definition of Christ. We are living in an analytical age, when everything is put on the dissecting-table and examined. Even our children we are making subjects of study, using them as specimens of natural history, investigating the way in which they begin to think, to live, to love. There are some experiences that seem to me too sacred for the laboratory. I do not wish to analyze the love of my mother or my wife or my child. I would rather have it than analyze it. And so I leave to others to determine what is the relation of Christ to the Everlasting Father, and what He is in Himself, what is the metaphysical analysis of His character. I do not know, and, reverently I say it, I do not much care to know. To me Christ is less an object of knowledge than of simple reverence and love. If I take the words of the old creeds or the older Bible as philosophical definitions to be scientifically interpreted, some of them I should have to doubt; but if I take them as the expressions of an exuberant, loyal love, I rejoice in them. To me He is Light of Light and God of God, very Light of very Light and very God of very God; to me He is the Wonderful, the Counselor, the Everlasting Father, the Prince of Peace; before Him I bow, crying out as I look up to His thorn-crowned brow and spear-pierced side, My Lord and my God! I know no reverence that goes beyond the reverence I give to Him; no love I ever knew goes beyond the love I want to offer Him; there is no loyalty I have toward any being, seen or unseen, known or imagined, that transcends the loyalty I wish to pay Him. He is my Lord, He is my Master. I am sorry I do not understand Him better; I am sorry I do not love Him more;



I am sorry my capacity for reverence is so slight; I am sorry I follow Him so far off; for He is my all and in all; I have no thought of God that runs beyond Him; no reverence or affection that ever transcends or can transcend what I want to lay at His feet.

And yet He says to me Follow me; and his Apostle says to me, Be ye like Him; and I believe that I can follow Him, and I dare to believe that I shall be like Him. For I believe that I am one of God's children and you are another, and He also is God's Son, the first-born among many brethren. This is my starting-point. If I began as the old theology began, with the total depravity of the human race, I should find a great perplexity to know how to reconcile my faith in Christ as man with my faith in Christ as God. But I start elsewhere; I start with this: that the whole human race are God's children, and Jesus Christ is the typical Son of man because He is the typical Son of God. What is human nature? Jesus Christ is human nature. If I want to know what the drama is, I will not go to a Bowery theater; I will read Shakespeare; if I want to know what is philosophy, I will not take the latest creed of Christian Science, I will read Plato; if I want to know what humanity is, I will not go to the bar-room to find it, I will go to Calvary. Jesus Christ is human nature as it is to be, as it is in its ideal, in its perfection. And when he says, Follow me, I believe I can. A father starts with his children for a climb, and they stop to gather flowers by the way, and he goes on; and by and by they find themselves alone and look up; and far above them on a cliff stands father, and he calls down to them, Boys, come on! How shall they come on? How shall they climb that steep precipice? They do not stop to ask. He is there; he says, Come on; they know they can find a path, and they can come on. He would not call them if they could not

come. And so, when the Christ stands far, far above me in the glad sunlight and calls down to me, Follow me, I know somewhere there is a path up the mountain-side that will lead me up, and if I follow by and by I shall stand by his side in the same glad sunlight. I can, or he would not call me. So I turn to my brothers and sisters who have stopped to pick flowers with me, and say to them, There is our Elder Brother. He is with Father. He calls us to follow him. We can, or He would not call us. He knows. Let us follow.

That has been my message ; and yet not all of it. If I could only think the whole world really, earnestly, intelligently wanted God and sought Him, what an easy message the Christian minister's message would be, and what a delightful thing it would be to give it ! It is delightful to give it to those who are seeking God, and to such I have been giving it for these eleven years. I am sorry I am not going to preach any more in Plymouth Church, and yet I am glad. I have preached here in Plymouth Church to men and women who themselves know what I know about God, who believe what I believe about Christ, who are familiar with my message. I hope that the good God who has let me give this message here will let me give it elsewhere, to men and women who do not know it as well as you know it, who have not heard it as often as you have heard it, and to whom it will be more news than it is to you. If I could only think that all the world were facing toward God and trying to climb toward Him, how easy would be the message ! but they are not. I see this one supreme Lord and Master, with His infinite, unfailing, patient love, coming into the world, and I look to see all men run to Him, saying, You are the one for whom we have been looking. I look to see them crown Him with flowers, and greet Him with palm-branches in their hands, crying, Hosanna to Him that

cometh in the name of the Lord ! But, behold, the crown on His brow is a crown of thorns, and his scepter is a spear thrust into his side. Because they did not understand Him? The better they understood Him the more they hated Him. He chose twelve. They did not understand Him very well. The eleven, as they came to understand Him better, loved Him more ; but Judas Iscariot, when he came to understand what Christ meant, what sacrifice, what self-abnegation, what surrender of one's self for the sake of others—Judas Iscariot hated Him. He did not want such a Lord and Master. When Caiaphas understood that Christ meant driving the traders out of the temple, abolishing the corrupt market-place, interfering with what he called his vested rights, abolishing the corruption by which he grew rich, Caiaphas said, The better I understand this man the more I hate Him. Shall I lose my place, my power, my position, my salary, for Him? Crucify Him ! When Pilate came to understand Him, and to see that to stand by Him bravely hazarded his office and perhaps even his life, he said, I will have none of Him ; let Him be crucified. The centurion did not hate Christ, but he was appointed to put Christ to death, and did it, arguing, I am not responsible ; I only do what I am commanded. It was so then ; it has been so ever since. For when love and justice and truth come into the world, hate and injustice and falsehood league themselves together to do it battle. The story of that passion week has been repeated throughout the ages. Still Judas Iscariot is betraying Christ ; still Caiaphas is trying to destroy Him ; still cowardly Pilate is saying, I would like to save Him if I could, but I would rather let Him be crucified than hazard my own fortunes. Still the centurion says, It is wrong, but it is none of my business. I meet Judas and Caiaphas and Pilate and the centurion every day. One man says, It is wrong to bribe a

legislature ; but if I have either to bribe a legislature or let my corporation suffer for lack of legislative support, I will bribe. This is Pilate. The ecclesiastic says, I would like to preach the truth ; but if the truth is going to injure the church, I dare not preach it. This is Caiaphas. The official says, I do not like this business to which I am assigned ; but I am not responsible. This is the centurion. They are all here. Christ calls us not only to a pilgrimage, but to a battle for truth. We are not merely a band of pilgrims, we are an army, if indeed we understand the Christ who says, Let him that hath no sword sell his garment and buy one.

I wish I could believe with Browning that evil is only good in the making. I wish I could think that all men are as good as I wish all men were. Perhaps if I did not know myself, I might think so. But I see this battle between goodness and vice, truth and falsehood, sensuality and purity, not only in the world without, but in the world within. I am the seventh of Romans, not yet graduated. All my victories come after a battle, all my uprisings come out of struggle, and I am set against myself. Pilate in me sometimes says, You dare not ; Caiaphas in me sometimes says, Take care of your institution ; the centurion in me sometimes says, That is none of your business.

So, seeing Christ in His world, that is, God in His world of men, not only calling them to follow him, but also setting the divine forces against the forces of corruption, sensuality, vice, pride, hypocrisy, false pretense, what men call vested interests, but I call vested wrongs, I wonder how God will direct this battle, what cohorts of heaven will He summon, what strength will He put forth to quell the wrong ; and, looking to the life of Him whom I believe to be God manifest in flesh, I see that He conquers wrong by not resisting it. He rebukes it ; but when it assaults Himself, He



conquers wrong by suffering wrong ; conquers hate, not by force, but by love ; conquers falsehood, not by violence, but by truth ; conquers the malignant forces of men by sacrifice of Himself.

I cannot believe that one member of the Godhead suffered and died to appease the wrath of another member of the Godhead, that men might be forgiven. I never believed that. I once did believe that God's laws must be enforced by penalty, and in order that God might remit the penalty it was necessary that some one should suffer it. I used to believe that God was bound by His own laws, and Christ by His sacrifice cut the bonds. I believe that no more. And I certainly cannot believe that Jesus Christ came to the earth and suffered and died to produce a moral impression on mankind. If I thought that Christ suffered and died to produce a moral impression on me, it would not produce a moral impression on me. The thought that He was dying for the purpose of producing that impression would destroy the impression. No ; Calvary is not a spectacular drama enacted before the world to bring tears to men's eyes. Shall I then eliminate sacrifice altogether from the New Testament, or think it can be eliminated from human life ? It runs throughout history. It begins with the lowest germ which cannot give forth life without dividing itself, and runs up into motherhood which gives life through pangs and travail pains. To discard sacrifice is to discard the teaching not only of the Bible but of life itself. The sacrifice of Christ is of the very essence of Christianity ; but sacrifice is not a condition of God's forgiveness, it is the method by which he forgives ; it is the method by which he pours his life into men, that they may live. A boy has been wild ; his father has made rules, and he has broken over them ; his mother has counseled, and he has disregarded the counsel. One night he comes

staggering past his mother's door ; and as he goes, he hears a voice broken with sobs, and stops and listens, and hears the mother's prayers for the boy she loves and can do nothing for, and he goes to his room sobered by his mother's sorrow. But if she had watched for his home-coming, and timed her tears to arrest his attention, they would have moved him only to scorn. I imagine philosophers gathered about her to discuss the reason of her grief. One says, It is that she may move the heart of the father, and appease his wrath, and win for her boy one more chance ; a second says, It is because whatsoever a man soweth he must reap, and the boy has sown bitter seed and she is trying by her sorrow to save him from a bitter harvest ; a third says, She is praying and weeping that she may move him to repentance. But she looks up through her tears with wonder, saying, If you understood a mother's heart you would know why she weeps when her boy goes staggering up-stairs from a drunken debauch. Through Christ's sacrifice I see the heart of God suffering so long as there is sin and suffering in the world. I see no theatric exhibition ; no plan of salvation ; no scheme contrived ; I see the heart of the Almighty eternally kind.

Men talk of suffering love. There is no love that is not suffering love so long as the loved one suffers. There is no love that is not suffering love so long as the loved one sins. "He was made sin for us who knew no sin." Do you not know what that means? Do you not know that this country never could have been retrieved from slavery if there had not been men who hated slavery, men who never owned a slave, and yet who felt slavery as their own sin because it was the sin of their nation? Have you never had a friend whose sin has burned into your heart as though it were your own? Have you never felt shame for another? Has remorse never touched you for a sin that was not yours? Some

of you have said to me, Why cannot you continue to preach Sunday mornings, and throw the pastoral burdens off? Preach, but do not take upon yourself the burdens and sorrows and problems of individuals. Simply come Sunday morning and preach to us. Do you suppose I could? Could I preach to sorrowing ones if I did not enter into their sorrows? Could I preach to doubting and skeptical ones if their own doubts did not reawaken doubts in me? Could I speak words that would help a struggling sinner if his sin had not come into my own life, and I did not feel it as though it were my own? No pastor can preach who does not suffer with his people and for his people; and through my poor, feeble experience I see the great historic truth that God bears the sins and the sorrows and the burdens of his ignorant and unworthy children, and helps them by bearing their burdens for them. The sacrifice of Christ is the father having compassion on his son and coming out to meet him.

The religion, then, that I have tried to preach to you has been something more than theology or ritualism or ethical rules of conduct. Clear thinking is desirable, but thinking about religion is not religion. Ordered public worship is desirable, but ordered public worship is not religion; it only ministers to it. Trying to do righteously to your neighbor comes nearer to being religion; but it is not very profound religion. Religion—that is, the Christian religion—seems to me to be this: Hearing this Christ call and trying to follow Him; catching the spirit of this Christ and trying to reproduce it; seeing that there are other people who do not know Him as well as you know Him yourself, and trying to communicate Him to others; and doing this by the lips, and doing it by the life. Religion is not believing some statements about God, it is living the divine life in the world. Religion, therefore, means, to the manu-

facturer, divine participation in the work of God's creation ; to the merchant, participation in the divine work of distribution of comfort and well-being ; to the lawyer, the ministry of justice, which is God's own attribute ; to the doctor, healing, health-giving, which Christ also did on earth ; to the teacher, unveiling the hidden truth to the eyes of men ; to the mother and to the father, translating into terms that little children can understand the fatherhood of God and the motherhood of God. Religion is life, and life is love, and love is God ; and the Christian religion is God in human life.

It is not all individual ; it is also social. Christ brings men and women together in one household of faith. He does not ask that they think alike ; nor that they worship alike ; nor that they act alike ; but that they *love* alike. Some of my brethren in the ministry say that we must be grounded in our creeds ; but when I turn to the New Testament, what I find is, "rooted and grounded in love," not in creed. The bond that binds us all together and makes us one great brotherhood is love, which is the bond of perfectness.

If there is any one topic on which I have spoken in this church, on which more of the members of this church have dissented from my views than on any other, it is the social topic. I have no overweening confidence in any methods of social reform which I have advocated in the past or hold to in the present ; but of one thing I am perfectly sure—that we are coming into the age in which, more and more, Christianity means Christian brotherhood. It means Christian unity in the Church ; it means Christian democracy in the Nation ; it means an international brotherhood, in which all the nations of the earth shall have a part ; it means fellowship, communion, a common life. The world will not be redeemed by a tariff nor by the abolition of



tariffs, by a personal tax nor by the abolition of personal taxes, by levying everything on the land nor by levying nothing on the land ; it will not be redeemed by socialism nor by individualism ; it will not be redeemed by the Republican party nor by the Democratic party, nor by the Prohibition party. It will be redeemed only when we come to understand that because we have one Father in heaven we are all brethren ; and the rich brother will see in the poor a brother, and the strong will see in the weak a brother, and the competent will see in the incompetent a brother, and the pure minded and the developed will see in the impure and undeveloped a brother ; and the Christian church will do what Christ did—not say, I will care for the worthy poor, but also, Give me the unworthy poor, what can I do for them? For to be a Christian is to bear one another's burdens, and so fulfil the law of Christ. Religion is not a narrow gate through which a single individual can slip into a state of bliss and leave the rest of the world outside. If it were, I would not want it. I would rather stay where men are in sorrow and in struggle, in poverty and in need, and share their sorrow and their suffering with them, than escape alone on a life-line and leave the rest to perish.

Something like this has been my message. I have preached many sermons, but I think they have all been included in this : That we are the sons of God ; that Jesus Christ is God in the flesh, come to tell us who God is, and what we are to be ; that to bring the world to know God we are to take up our cross and follow Him, and live and love and serve and suffer as He did ; and through that ministry of love and service and sacrifice the world will at last be made one great brotherhood, looking up to one Father and one Lord and Saviour, Jesus Christ.

I am sorry to leave Brooklyn, which has been my home for these last eleven years and more ; I am still more sorry

to leave Plymouth Church pulpit and Plymouth Church, which has filled me with its love, inspired me with its hope, and helped to clarify my vision with its faith; I am most of all sorry to leave the pastorate, to which I never expect to return. But I hope, as long as God gives me breath to speak and heart to feel, to tell my fellow-men by pen and voice, what I have tried to tell you this morning—that God is love and life is love, and Christ is the revelation of both; and when the eyes grow dim and are closed, and the lips stammer and cease to speak, and the pulses stop their beating, still I hope, from some other sphere, unhampered by sin, unhindered by the body, to go on, in some other way, as God shall give me grace, to repeat that message, which then I shall understand better than I do now—that God is love, and life is love, and Christ is the revelation of love and life and God.







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